THE

ITALIAN NOVELISTS:

SELECTED FROM THE

MOST APPROVED AUTHORS

IN

THAT LANGUAGE;

FROM THE EARLIEST PERIOD DOWN TO THE CLOSE OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY:

ARRANGED

IN AN HISTORICAL AND CHRONOLOGICAL SERIES.

TRANSLATED FROM THE

ORIGINAL ITALIAN.

ACCOMPANIED WITH

NOTES, CRITICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL.

BY THOMAS ROSCOE.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

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The Italian Novelists.

BY THOMAS ROSCOE.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASVATI MAHAL.
1142

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THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL.
Serfojee Rajah 1830

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Novels of Sabadino degli Arienti.

SABADINO DEGLI ARIENTI.*

In the Chronological Series, which it is proposed to observe, the author who next follows Massuccio, is Sabadino degli Arienti, a native of Bologna, and a person of some distinction in the district in which he was born. In addition to his claims as a novelist, he is known to have been an accomplished scholar and historian, his account of his native city being esteemed an extremely valuable work by his countrymen. He inscribed his volume of tales to Ercole, Duke of Ferrara, entitling them *Porretane*, from the feigned circumstance of their having been recited at the baths of Porretta, (whither the principal inhabitants of Bologna were accustomed during the summer season to resort, as a place of public amusement,) for the purpose, as the author himself informs us, of entertaining the ladies and gentlemen who attended. Whether really written with this view

* Le Porretane, dove si tratta di settantuna novelle, con moralissimi documenti e dichiarazioni dell' anima, &c.—Bologna, 1483, folio.

or not, the period of their composition corresponds very nearly with that of their publication, the first edition containing seventy-one novels, appearing at Bologna in the year 1483. The greater part of these consists of amusing adventures and witty remarks, though they are occasionally interspersed with incidents of a more sombre cast.

There is no mention in contemporary writers of any particulars relating to the life and character of this novelist, but from some of his own productions alluded to by Ghirardacci and by Orlandi, it would appear that, far from having been of obscure descent, he lived on intimate terms with the family of Bentivoglio, one of the first in the country, to a member of which, Annibale Bentivoglio, he dedicated one of his publications, with expressions of familiar friendship. And if we may judge from some account contained in the twenty-seventh of his novels, some branches of his family ranked among the first merchants of Ferrara, whose liberality, integrity, and loyalty, rendered them an ornament to the city. He was well versed in the antiquities of his native place, and intimate with a gentleman of Verona, called Feliciano, attached to the same pursuits; of whom, on the authority of our novelist, there is a particular account in the Marchese Maffei's history

of that place. He enjoyed, too, the society and correspondence of the celebrated Guarino, of Carbone, and of Cornazzano and other illustrious poets and orators of the age.

Besides his novels, Arienti wrote an account of "Illustrious Ladies," "Delle Donne Clare," dedicated to Guinipera Sforza Bentivoglio, still preserved in the public archives of Bologna. From the date of its composition in 1484, the period in which this novelist flourished very clearly appears. The exact time, likewise, in which he composed his Porretane is evident from his expressions in what he terms the Licenza of his work, where he says, that having sought refuge in Camurata from the pestilence which occurred in 1478,* and desolated his own district, he devoted himself with infinite pleasure to the invention of these tales. Many of Sabadino's stories are by no means destitute of intrinsic merit, but they cannot boast of the ornament of a pure and graceful style. His composition too much resembles, in its loose and inverted construction, that of Massuccio; the sole distinction being, that the peculiarities and even barbarisms of his language, are of Bolognese instead of Neapolitan extraction. Inde-

* It also raged in Rome, Mantua, and Venice, in the same year.

pendent of this, the chief portion of those stories, which are founded upon the historical events of his own times, is of very inferior merit, with no sort of interest attaching to their details. The earliest edition of the Porretane in folio, 1483, has been since followed by four or five others, nearly at the same period of time, though at different places, and none later than the middle of the sixteenth century.

A few of the Porretane may be considered as possessed of no common degree of dramatic interest, although their general character is of a light and agreeable cast, several of these displaying the common failing of the earlier Italian novelists, derived from ages still more rude and remote, in attempts at jests and witticisms which have little or nothing to recommend them.

SABADINO DEGLI ARIENTI.

NOVELLA IV.

"My very excellent and much esteemed count, my kind patron and benefactor, and you no less, my worthy friends, deign to hear an amusing little anecdote which I some time since happened to note down from the lips of one every way deserving of credit.

"Know, then, that in our city, altogether under the authority of the church, there flourished a certain learned advocate, a member of the great Castello family, Messer Dionisio by name. He was a man of strong sense and great acquirements, and not unfrequently employed in high offices, as the first citizen of our republic, whose true freedom and interests he so much promoted. Having occasion to enter into the legal arena with another advocate, whose name I cannot just now recollect, in a cause connected with the noble memory of Madonna Margarita, consort to Messer Pietro de' Guidori, whose property had been disputed, our friend, Messer Dionisio, was retained as counsel to Signor Gioanni de' Bentivoglio. It was tried before our worthy magistrate, Messer

Niccoluzzo de' Piccoluomini of Sienna; and, as it often happens to these gentlemen of the robe, when deeply engaged in the interests of their clients, they became so very personal in the cause of their principals, that at length the adversary of our worthy friend, unable to bear his bitter taunts, fairly challenged his honour and veracity, which so incensed our good citizen, Messer Dionisio, that in a fit of sudden passion, he clenched his fist, and smote his learned antagonist very severely on the mouth. The presiding magistrate, greatly scandalized at our friend's new method of enforcing his arguments, vigorously remonstrated with him, and threatened to enforce the full penalty of the law, assuring him that he dealt too mildly in not committing him on the spot; and he would have executed his menace, had not the high qualities and connexions of Messer Dionisio restrained him. He replied to the threats made use of by the judge, with the most perfect composure, 'Most noble prætor, according to the tenor of our civil law, I believe you will only be able to demand about ten pieces from me;' and, putting his hand into his pocket, he drew forth ten broad gold ducats, saying, 'Take only what the law allows you, and hand me the remainder back.' But the judge, seizing in a rage upon the whole,

cried, 'You must apply elsewhere for the remainder;' which again brought the angry counsellor upon his legs. Turning quickly round upon his adversary, now busily employed in repairing the ruins of his jaws, and uttering fierce exclamations for justice, our friend again addressed him: 'If this be the case, I must have what I have paid for, over and above;' and he struck him a more violent blow than before upon his left cheek. He then addressed the judge: 'My lord, you have made me pay for more than the amount of both the arguments I have applied in the very face of my learned brother; but keep the money; he is a pitiful advocate, indeed, who would scruple to take advantage of his opponent for the sake of ten ducats. I have had my revenge.' And turning his back upon the court, he left his brother advocate quite unable to make any reply, and grievously lamenting and appealing to the magistrate for justice. He was at last obliged to be patient, for though somewhat incensed, neither the magistrate nor the audience could refrain from indulging a degree of mirth at the singular arguments of our friend Dionisio. The only sentence obtained that day in court was, 'Chi ricevette il male se n'ebbe il danno.' He who received the injury sustained all the loss."

NOVELLA IX.

"The following story, my dear lord and patron, and you, his very noble guests, will be found to belong to the period when our valiant countrymen triumphed, near the bridge of San Ambrosio, over the troops of Encio, King of Sardinia, son of the emperor Frederic II., whose bones, as a token of our victory, are still lying, graced with a becoming epitaph, in the church of our good Frati Predicatori. The subject of the unhappy adventure which occurred about the time we speak of, was one of our young fellow-citizens of the name of Malatesta, son of Alberto de' Carbonesi, sprung from an ancient and noble family, of which our excellent friend now living in our city, likewise Alberto by name, is a descendant.

"From his infant years, the young Malatesta had attached himself to the society of a sweet young girl, daughter of Messer Paolo Galuzzi, a noble cavalier, named Lelia. Their youthful companionship at length ripened into warmer feelings, and her lover soon became an object of idolatry in the eyes of the fair maiden, who, from his fascinating manners and accom-

plishments, had been already prevailed upon to pledge her truth, on condition of obtaining her parents' consent, to yield him her willing hand. Enraptured with his success, the glowing youth imagined that every other difficulty must soon give way, and that he might hope soon to enjoy the supreme happiness of possessing the charming and long-loved Lelia for his wife. But his anguish and disappointment were extreme when he found her father persisted in the refusal of his hand and of his visits. Although this was a severe blow, he resolved to die sooner than to relinquish the object he had in view. To further his purpose, he had instant recourse to the favourite maid of the beloved girl; vowing to make the prize his own before the father had time to bestow her beauties upon another. Having obtained the confidence of her maid Lisetta, he scaled the gardens, and approaching the chamber of the lady at the dead of night, with the girl's assistance he awoke her, and had the delight of beholding at the balcony that form, which from a very boy he had always loved. He gazed upon her, while rapture, for a moment, impeded his utterance; but the next, he seized her white hands in his, and was at her side. 'Forgive me, but I come to put an end, my own Lelia, to our long unpitied anguish and deep suffer-

ings. Let our present joy and happiness obliterate them for ever! Only consent to be mine! A priest is ready to bind our hands.' Mingled emotions of joy and shame shook the bosom of the gentle girl as he spoke, and her tears fell upon his hands, as she answered him with a faultering voice, 'Alas! alas! what can I do? My father! my poor father! Yet he would give me to another.' Malatesta, whose eyes had been long rivetted in silence upon the surpassing grace and loveliness of her charms, thus expressed the emotions of his heart: 'You are all, my beautiful Lelia, that my fondest hopes and wishes would have you to be; and you know, that from the earliest time I can recollect, your goodness, your exceeding beauty, and the sweetness of your voice and language, have made me, far beyond your noble birth, ever desirous of serving and obliging you. Indeed I am incessantly studying to that end, and though your father thinks me too bold and aspiring, as truly I fear I am, and all unworthy to possess so much excellence, it is still unjust and unwise in him to slight your wishes, and to forbid you to become my own sweet wife. Nor in so acting does he fairly appreciate the value of my ancient name and my possessions, much less the inexpressible love I bear you. You are aware what innumerable suitors have as-

pired to the bliss of calling you theirs, and yet not one has had the fortune to succeed, as if your father's displeasure were to become the cause of your unhappiness, consuming the morning of your beauty in solitude, while it had been far more wise and honourable to bestow you in the bloom of your young affections upon him who deserves you best. It is this which has now brought me to your feet, to combat such opinions, in every way so unworthy of your father, who not satisfied with debarring you from the indulgence of your affections for the object of your regard, would exclude and destroy them altogether. Against all reason, love, and the laws of society, he in fact tells you that you shall not wed. Most meekly, with a full heart, I conjure you not to confirm such ungenerous views. But come with me, my own love, and be the most cherished and honoured creature that ever blest a husband's choice. Look up, then, my Lelia; tell me you will be mine, and, believe me, your friends will not only soon be reconciled, but rejoiced to hear of the event.' Deep drawn sighs, half love, half grief, were, for a long time, the only answer she could give, till at length a burst of tenderness and sorrow was audible. 'You have been to me,' she said, 'always a companion and friend, whom

I loved beyond every thing else in the world; and I know the words you speak are as sweet as they ever were, and as true. Take me then, my lord and husband, for your worth, your virtues, and kind manners, have made me, alas! too indifferent to every thing else in the world. And now be happy, and doubt no more, dear Malatesta; I will follow you, though death should be my portion, wherever you please, rejoicing in my sufferings, as long as we preserve unshaken our tried and faithful love.' On these words he instantly led her away, and placing a rich diamond upon her finger, he espoused her before the holy man, who had been in readiness to receive them.

"When he had borne her, with the utmost difficulty, from the paternal mansion, and was preparing to enter his own, his fair bride turning towards the servant who had accompanied them, said, 'Tell my parents that I am now the wife of the noblest youth our city can boast, Malatesta Carbonese, who ever honoured and loved me.' Her maid, Lisetta, not without shedding tears at parting, thus replied: 'Ah, my dear young mistress, beware how you do or say any thing that may wound the pride of your family, for I fear, I sadly fear'——'Fear nothing, but return, and answer only to such questions as may be re-

quired of you, if you are fearful of your own safety; nay, do not weep for me, Lisetta, and farewell.' The grateful and happy lover then conducted his fair bride into her new dwelling, intending on the following day to employ the interest of all his friends to obtain a speedy reconciliation with her family. Early on the following day, Donna Erminia, the young lady's mother, inquiring for her daughter, was informed by her maid Lisetta, as she had been directed, that she had become the wedded wife of Malatesta Carbonese on the previous evening. In the utmost anger and alarm the lady immediately ran into her husband's chamber, crying, 'Oh, Messer Paulo, we are lost, we are dishonoured: Lelia has eloped this very night with Malatesta Carbonese, into whose house she has been carried.' In an impulse of rage and grief, far exceeding that of his wife, Messer Paulo instantly rose and armed himself, crying in a loud voice for his servants and his sons. Accompanied by these, he hastened to the house of Alberto Carbonese, at a short distance from his own, with purposes of the most deadly revenge. On breaking into the place, the first object they met was a female servant, whom they instantly sacrificed to their fury. But fortunately for Alberto and two of his sons, they had set out two days before for

a country-seat at Ronzano, where the estates of the family lay. Finding none of the inmates in the lower rooms, the enraged brothers immediately proceeded to search the chambers, and soon arriving at one which seemed to resist their efforts, they furiously burst it open, and rushed upon the defenceless lovers, who vainly sought to shelter each other from their impending fate. Awed by their sister's piercing cries, they stood a moment, nor ventured to stab him in her arms. But binding his throat and face with their fierce hands, they smothered him as he lay on the bridal couch; their equally savage father having dragged the poor girl out of the chamber while the deed was done. He then drew her back by her fair hair into the fatal room, exclaiming, 'There! Go take thy pleasure now, infamous wretch as thou art! thou hast given me a revenge in which I shall always exult.' They then closed the door, and hastened from the house. The weeping Lelia having raised herself with difficulty, in the agony of her despair, cast her eyes upon the couch, and beheld the discoloured and deathlike features of her beloved. She threw herself upon the body, unconscious for a long time of her existence, but when she recovered from her swoon, as from a deep slumber, in which she had forgotten what had past, surprise

and terror overwhelmed her with redoubled force, and she felt how much easier it would be to die than to recover from another such attack, into which she was very nearly relapsing. Unable longer to contend with her emotions, she again threw her arms around her husband's neck, and kissing him tenderly, exclaimed, 'Alas! alas! and hast thou so soon left me? Whither is thy sweet spirit fled? May heaven's pity be denied to those who have so basely robbed me of the dear companion of my days! And art thou gone without thy Lelia? O treacherous friends! no longer friends or relations of mine! Speak, speak to me, my love; breathe again the soft words you lately breathed into mine ear, promising me never, never more to part. Oh, dear, unhappy scene of all our bliss and woe! How soon has our supreme delight turned into bitter tears and pain, ourselves preparing the means for our cruel enemies to wreak their sad revenge? Ah, that they had first sacrificed me to their fury, and saved me from what I now feel! Oh, savage father, and more savage brothers! you will live to regret your cruelty when you behold the Lelia once so dear to you stretched lifeless before your eyes. Would to heaven I had never consented, my love, to yield to thy honied words! Then I had still gazed on thee, still heard thy voice.

not been the wretch I now am. But why these vain tears and grief? It is very weak and unworthy to indulge them, when I can follow thee, my husband, and free my burthened spirit from the load it bears. Shall I shew myself unequal to the many bright examples of love, even unto death? No, I will die the death he died, cruel as it was. I promised to follow him to the last.'

"Saying these words, she provided herself with the very same means of destruction as had proved fatal to her unfortunate lover, exclaiming, in the agony of her grief, 'Cruel father, and still more savage brothers, may you live long and wretchedly after my death! May heaven deal out to you only the pity you have shewn!' And then once more invoking the name of her beloved husband, she launched herself into eternity; and the fair form was soon all that remained of so much loveliness and truth.

"A crowd had gradually assembled round the mansion of Alberto, after observing the furious departure of Messer Paulo and his people, and suspecting some fatal occurrence had taken place, no answer being returned to their repeated calls, several individuals made their way into the house. The first object they beheld was the murdered servant; but they were far more horror-struck on advancing fur-

ther, to find the beautiful form of Lelia hanging lifeless on her bridal couch. Exclamations of grief and indignation burst from all around; nor was it long before the grievous tidings reached the ears of the father and friends of the unhappy youth. Hastening back with his other sons to Bologna, such was the impression produced by their representations and appearance, that the whole city rose, and the followers of both powerful families coming to action, Messer Paulo, the young bride's father, was compelled to save himself, with his son Egano, by flight, while his other two sons were taken and executed according to the laws, a decree of exile being awarded against the rest of the family.

"The remains of the unhappy lovers, wedded thus in death, were then consigned to the earth, not without the lamentation of the people, in the church of San Giacomo, where a noble monument was raised to their memory, bearing the following inscription:

Chi s'amò più che la sua vita in terra,
Gli nervi e l'ossa sue quì dentro serra.

Their love beyond the love of life on earth,
Lies seal'd in death, awaiting heavenly birth."

NOVELLA XLII.

"Listen, O bright and beautiful ladies, and you, most noble count, and gentlemen all, to the following story, which I trust cannot fail to amuse you!

"Not very long ago there were four noble, though somewhat humorous students, residing at our university of Sienna, whose names were Messer Antonio da Clerico, a canonist; Messer Giovanni da Santo Geminiano, a young jurist; Maestro Antonio di Paulo di Val d'Arno d'Arezzo; and Maestro Michel di Cosimo Aretino delli Conti di Palazzolo, who, when young, was surnamed Bacica, now a distinguished civilian in the university of Bologna, full of years and virtue, beloved by the whole people for his kind and charitable actions. But waving these last considerations, I proceed to inform you, that while remaining in the house of the Master of the Academy of Arts, the youthful pupils became acquainted with a certain disciple of Galen, who though a mere quack, imagined he was possessed of more learning than Avicenna himself. His name was Niccolo da Massa, to which had been added that of *Portantino*, from the peculiarity of his ambling gait; and as his residence

lay opposite to that of the governor, his singularities attracted the particular attention of the pupils.

"Now it happened, that in the month of February, during the salting season, the doctor had purchased a fine pig, which he subsequently had killed, and hung up, as is usual, previous to the operation of salting, for four or five days in his kitchen. The merry scholars, aware of this stage of the proceedings, set their heads to contrive how they might feast at the doctor's charge. It so fell out, that a fellow student named Messer Pietro di Leri Martini, had lately left the academy, and afterwards died of a fever; and on this fact they resolved to ground the success of their exploit. Introducing themselves secretly into the doctor's premises, and watching their opportunity, they laid hands upon the pork, a fact which struck the doctor with equal horror and surprise, when he beheld his kitchen the next morning emptied of its treasure. After indulging in a variety of imprecations and suspicions, his doubts at last fell upon his young neighbours the scholars, who had indeed already acquired some little reputation for similar exploits. Believing that he had now discovered the authors of the diabolical theft, he waited on Messer Amadio da Città di Castello, the presiding magistrate in Sienna, who having heard his evidence, despatched three several messengers, commanding

an immediate restoration of the pork to the right owner, unless the young gentlemen wished to be proceeded against criminally. The answer which the magistrate received was, that the scholars were greatly surprised at such a message, and were sorry that they had not so fine a pig in their possession, happening to know nothing about it. But being still persecuted with the complaints of the doctor, the magistrate resolved to investigate the affair thoroughly, sending a warrant to search the scholars' chambers, and to bring them all before him should the pork be discovered in their possession. Expecting such a visit, the students were not a little puzzled how to proceed, when Messer Antonio da Clerico, who by his singular ingenuity and facetiousness had always shewn himself equal to every emergency, encouraged the flagging spirits of his companions, saying: 'Fear not, my brave boys; fear not the Podestà and his myrmidons: we will be a match for them yet. We will extract a little amusement out of them too, if you mind what I say. Let us get up a sick couch in the chamber opposite the entrance hall, and fill it with all kinds of the most sickly preparations that can disgust the human nose. And when the officers come, you must all stand at the entrance, buried in profound grief; and when they ask you what is the matter, shake your heads

and point to the inner chamber, saying, 'Poor fellow, he is dying of the plague.' Now this sick gentleman shall be no other than the pig, and trust me, whoever ventures within sight of him, shall wish himself away again as speedily as possible. For you know the whole city is disturbed about the death of our fellow student, who died only the other day of the plague.' His companions immediately set up a loud laugh, in token of their approbation, crying: 'Come, let us go to work then; we cannot be hanged for it after all. Then preparing a table spread with cushions, they laid the pig upon it at full length, with a nightcap over his head, and stuck out his fore feet with white sleeves, so as to resemble the arms of a human being; while his hind ones were decorated with a pair of slippers. Soon after completing their arrangements, appeared the officers of the police, who on requiring entrance, were readily admitted by the scholars, some of whom, on advancing further, they found overwhelmed with sorrow, wringing their hands, and crying out most piteously, 'Oh, my dear, dear brother;' at which the officers, apprehending some fatal accident, inquired into the cause of their complaint. The shrewd Maestro Michele on this stepped forward: 'It is my brother, my poor brother, who is here dying, we are afraid.' 'Dying! what is

the matter with him?' 'They say it is the plague; but I will never desert him!' On this one of the officers opened the chamber door with some caution, and stumbling on the shocking object which presented itself, drew back in great alarm; for on the left hand was seen Messer Antonio, as the priest, administering spiritual consolation, with book and crucifix in hand, and wax lights burning, to the poor scholar, falling apparently a victim to the plague. At this overpowering sight, without saying a word, he ran out of the house, followed by his companions. Returning to the magistrate, he with difficulty made himself understood; expressing the utmost horror of the business on which he had been sent. 'How,' cried the magistrate, 'can it be true?' 'True?' returned the officer; 'I saw the poor wretch stretched out, dying of the plague, and his brother and all his companions buried in the deepest grief.' 'And did you go into the room? did you touch the body?' inquired the magistrate. 'To be sure I did.' 'Then why do you come here? Away with you, you wretches; we shall have the whole city infected:' and the magistrate drove them away, forbidding them, as they valued their lives, again to enter into his presence.

"The wily Messer Antonio, called the Priest, in the mean while, observing the rout of these myrmidons

of the law, hastily dressed himself amidst the triumph and applauses of his companions, and set out for the house of the Podestà, in order to obviate any disagreeable consequences that might attend the tidings which had just gone forth. He arrived just in time to catch the magistrate as he was proceeding to the grand council, to acquaint the members with the fact which had just transpired, and propose means for the safety of the city. To him then, Messer Antonio related the whole of the affair, on the part of the scholars, as it had occurred from the beginning. It was a great relief to the magistrate to hear that there was really no pestilential disorder abroad; and he laughed outright at the humorous way in which Messer Antonio related to him the incidents of the story. 'O you collegians,' he cried; 'you are true children of perdition. There is nothing of which you are not capable; and woe to the unfortunate wretch that falls into your hands.' As they were now approaching the Palazzo delli Signori, the Podestà resolved, instead of alarming them with tidings of the plague, to amuse them with one of the best stories which he had for some time heard. Such was the pleasure which it afforded, that they obliged its ingenious author to repeat the whole to them again, mingling their mirth with a little seasonable advice,

and commanding him to make immediate restitution of the doctor's pig. But to this, with one voice, the scholars all demurred, beseeching their lordships that they would not please to insist on such hard conditions, inasmuch as it would be throwing a sort of discredit on real learning, were they to refuse to permit the scholars to punish so much absurd quackery and ignorance, as were manifested by this disciple of Galen: and they trusted that their lordships would not interfere to interrupt the joke in the happiest stage, but would permit them to eat the pig since they had caught it. Grateful for the entertainment afforded them, the council could scarcely prevail upon themselves to treat the ingenious author of the plot with the rigour of the law, although they strongly advised restitution of the pig. But the humorous Antonio conducted his defence in so happy and eloquent a manner, that the pork was allowed to remain in the hands of the scholars; and the court adjourned. They immediately proceeded to regale themselves with the spoils they had won. Frequently that night did they drink to the health of Doctor Portantino, who had presented them with a portion of the feast, nor were the wines less relished after they had partaken of roasted pig."

Luigi da Porto.

LUIGI DA PORTO.

A SINGLE story, entitled *La Giulietta*, from the pen of Luigi da Porto, a gentleman of Vicenza, will follow these remarks. Luigi sprung from a noble and ancient family of that place. He was the son of Bernardino da Porto and Lisabetta di Savorgnano. He entered early into military life, and was for some time in the service of the republic of Venice, in quality of a captain of light-horse, giving signal proofs of his valor during the campaigns of Gradisca, and the wars connected with the famous league of Cambray. But on receiving a wound, though extremely slight, in the tendons of the neck, such was its effect, as to compel him to relinquish the career of arms, and render him a cripple for the remainder of his life. He subsequently retired to his native city, where he died in 1529, before he had completed the forty-fourth year of his age. He was connected with nearly all the great wits and scholars of his time, among whom he numbered Cardinal Bembo, several members of the family of Gonzaga, and many others of distinguished rank and reputation. He also enjoyed the

society of Veronica Gambara, and of Emilia Pia da Montefeltro, both ladies of eminent talents and accomplishments, who adorned the age in which they lived.

Perhaps the title of novelist was at one time the least of Luigi's claims, as he acquired the reputation of an elegant and accomplished scholar and poet, and displayed much classical taste in his compositions, both in the Italian and Latin languages. He is said by Marzari, the historian of Vicenza, to have produced several other novels, a supposition which, if true, must lead us to deplore their loss; as there are too few in the voluminous catalogue of Italy, which can boast of the purity and excellence of his Giulietta. It is dedicated to the lady Lucina Savorgnana, one of his near relations.

There are two old editions of the Giulietta, both published within a short period of each other at Venice. One of these has the date of June 10th, 1535, 8vo. from the press of Bindoni; and the other from that of Marcolini, 8vo. 1539. A more recent one has likewise appeared, edited by the Cavalier Michel-Angiolo Zorzi of Vicenza, including the Rime of the author, printed in Vicenza, 4to. 1731, by Lavezzari, The story of Giulietta is in this edition an exact reprint from that of Marcolini, the editor not appear-

ing to have been aware of the earlier one of Bindoni; between which and the more recent one, many striking variations may be perceived. This doubtless arises from the circumstance of one of them having received the corrections, and perhaps embellishments of the celebrated Bembo, while the other was probably taken from the original MS. From a letter of Bembo, dated the 18th February, 1531, addressed to Bernardino, the brother of Luigi, it appears that the writer was desirous of having in his possession the MSS. of his deceased friend. Four years subsequent to the date of this letter the novel first made its appearance, during which time it is highly probable it may have undergone the revision of Bembo. It is certain that Luigi was highly esteemed by him, as appears from a letter directed to our author during his lifetime; nor is Bembo thought by other writers to have overrated the merits of his Giulietta, compared with the novels of his countrymen.

Though his sole remaining production in the class of fictitious narrative, it is fully sufficient to establish his claim to a high station among Italy's best novelists. He cannot, indeed, boast of the merit of its invention; but his improvement on the old story, attributed to so many different sources, and even on that of Massuccio Salernitano, are of such a kind as

MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S

to give it all the effect, beauty, and pathos of an original narrative.

Though this story is extended much beyond the limits of a great portion of the Italian Novelle, the translator has scarcely thought himself at liberty to make the least alteration or curtailment, no less on account of its own intrinsic merits, than its relation to one of the sweetest and most favorite productions of England's greatest dramatist. Not that this tale supplied Shakspeare with the plot and incidents of his Romeo and Juliet, which are evidently taken from a version of Massuccio's story of an earlier date, but it may serve to shew, how far the dramatist, who has not, indeed, improved upon his model of Massuccio, has fallen short of the pathetic beauty of Luigi da Porto's story in its conclusion. It is only in the latter that we meet with the affecting circumstance of Juliet rising from her trance, before the death of Romeo; all other versions of the story omitting a scene so essential to the pathos of the catastrophe. And though the rest of the variations in these different productions are of minor importance, they will uniformly be found in favor of Luigi da Porto; a circumstance which strongly favors the supposition that Shakspeare never perused his novel. He must have been misled, then, in this point, by

the metrical history of Romeus and Giuliet, which was taken, as Mr. Dunlop remarks, from several minute coincidences, from the old drama by Luigi da Groto, which accords with Shakspeare's in many particulars. In both, there is a garrulous old nurse, and it would appear from several other particulars pointed out by Mr. Walker, in his Memoir on Italian Tragedy, that the old play by Da Groto must have been seen by the English dramatist.

But though not the exact source from which Shakspeare drew one of the earliest and most favorite of his dramas, it is this Italian story which has since suggested the improvement that has been adopted, on the stage, at its close, where Romeo does not expire before the revival of Juliet. Besides, its own dramatic interest, and its language and character, are altogether such as to place it among the happiest specimens in the class of pathetic Novelle. Still, its merits will be found to consist, with very few exceptions, in the superior manner in which it has been treated, as there is too striking a coincidence between the works of Da Porto and of Massuccio, to allow us to believe that the author of Giulietta was not acquainted with the Mariotto and Giannozza of his predecessor. In most of the leading circumstances, though not in the conclusion, they

are precisely similar. Luigi himself, however, asserts that the story was related to him, while serving as a soldier in Friuli, by one of his archers, who usually attended him, to beguile the solitary road leading from Gradisca to Udino. But it is certain, that the same story had long before been familiar to the writers of various countries, wheresoever it may have first taken its origin, whether derived in some connected chain of tradition from one source, or, as is more probable, founded on a similar occurrence in different countries. It has been traced to a Greek romance; and was historically treated as a real event, by Girolamo della Corte, in his history of Verona. It also forms the ninth of the second part of Bandello's novels, borrowed from Luigi da Porto, where the event is said to have happened in the time of Bartolommeo della Scala; this tale corresponds very nearly with the novel of Giulietta. The same story passed into France, where it is related by Adrien Sevin of two Sclavonians residing in the Morea. Thus it was adopted into the tragic stories of Belleforest, and likewise into Painter's Palace of Pleasure. From its traditionary character, therefore, it is not impossible, that Luigi da Porto may have heard it from the lips of one of his archers; though this can hardly be reconciled with the nume-

rous coincidences that exist between his story and that of Massuccio.

There are several other dramas, besides Shakspeare's Romeo and Juliet, founded upon the same subject; but none nearly so faithful to the simplicity and pathos of the original, as found in the novels of Da Porto and Massuccio. If Shakspeare was unfortunate in not preserving one of the most touching incidents in the catastrophe, it is a fault in him scarcely perceptible, and amply compensated by such transcendent beauty of language and sentiment, as appeals with irresistible force to the soul of the reader; leaving the plot, so essential to the success of other writers, with him only a secondary consideration. But in other dramatists, their departure from the truth and beauty of the story has been wilful, nor atoned for by those superior charms of sentiment and passion, which lie scattered with so profuse a hand in the works of its English imitator. Two of these rival productions are from the pens of Spanish dramatists, contemporary likewise with Shakspeare; one being written by the prolific Lope de Vega, and the other by Fernando Roxas, which, of the two, approaches nearest to the English Romeo and Juliet. But in Lope, the names as well as the incidents are altered, and the tragic close is turned

into "a merry meeting," and a marriage sanctioned by the lady's friends. The Spanish lover has the grave precaution not to swallow poison before visiting the tomb of the lady; and on her recovery from her trance, he forthwith escorts her to a castle of her father's, but seldom frequented by the aged gentleman. There, however, preparing to celebrate a new marriage, he is somewhat surprised to meet with his deceased daughter, and mistaking her for a spirit, he begins to deplore his former harshness to her, declaring how happy he should be, could he now unite her to the object of her choice. The hero now comes forward; and as soon as the father is fully satisfied of their corporeal existence, he consents to their union, and the lovers, after embracing each other, fall at his feet.

LUIGI DA PORTO.

THE NOVEL OF JULIET.

At the period when Bartolommeo della Scala, a gentle and accomplished prince, presided over the destinies of our native place, a fine and beautiful tract of country, I frequently remember hearing my father say, that there flourished two noble, but rival families, whose exasperation against each other was carried to the utmost extreme. The name of one of these was the Cappelletti, that of the other the Montecchi; and it is believed that the descendants of the latter faction are now residing in Udino, in the persons of Messer Niccolo and Messer Giovanni, who settled there by some strange chance, under the title of Monticoli of Verona. They would appear, however, to have retained little of their ancient splendor and reputation, beyond their courteous manners and demeanor. And although, on perusing several ancient chronicles, I have met with the names of the families, who are mentioned as united in the same cause, I shall merely touch upon their history, as it

was told to me in the following words, without deviating from the original authority.

Both families, we are told, were equally powerful and wealthy, abounding in friends and relatives, and highly favored in Verona, under the above mentioned prince. Whether of a private or a public nature, the feud which arose between them was of a very ferocious and fatal character, various partizans on both sides falling victims to its rage. Nor was it, until weary of mutual wrongs, and awed by the repeated commands and entreaties of their prince, that they were induced to enter into such terms as to meet or to address each other peaceably without apprehension of further violence and bloodshed. But daily becoming more reconciled, it happened that a festival was to be given by Messer Antonio, the head of the house of the Cappelletti, a man of gay and joyous character, who made the most magnificent preparations to receive all the chief families in the city. At one of these assemblies there one evening appeared a youth of the Montecchi family, who followed thither some lady whom he was desirous, as lovers often are, of accompanying in person (no less than in mind) upon such occasions of general festivity. He had a noble and commanding person, with elegant and accomplished manners; and he had no

sooner withdrawn his mask, screening himself in the character of a wood-nymph, than every eye was turned with admiration on his beauty, which appeared to surpass even that of the most beautiful ladies present. But he more especially attracted the attention of an only daughter of Messer Antonio, whose charms both of mind and person were unrivalled throughout the whole city. Such was the impression she received at his appearance, that from the moment their eyes first met, she found that she was no longer mistress of her own feelings. She saw him retire into a distant part of the assembly, seldom coming forward either in the dance, or in converse with others, bearing himself like one who kept a jealous watch over some beloved object, whom he would fain have held aloof from the joyous scene. Such a thought struck a chill to her heart, as she had heard he was a youth of warm and animated manners. About the approach of midnight, towards the conclusion of the ball, was struck up the dance of the torch, or of the hat, whichever we choose to call it, usually proposed with us before the breaking up of the feast. While the company stand round in a circle, each dancer takes his lady, and the lady him, changing partners as they please. As it went round, the noble youth was led out by a lady, who chanced

to place him near the enamoured daughter of Cappelletti. On the other side of her stood a youth named Marcuccio Guercio, whose hand, ever cold to the touch, happened to come in contact with the fair lady's palm; and soon after Romeo Montecchi, being on her left hand, took it in his, as was customary. On which the lady, anxious to hear his voice, said, "Welcome to my side, Messer Romeo;" and he observing her eyes were fixed upon his, awaiting his reply, and delighted at the tone of her voice, returned, "How! am I indeed then welcome?"—"Yes: and I ought to thank you," she returned, smiling; "since my left hand is warmed by your touch, whilst that of Marcuccio freezes my right." Assuming a little more confidence, Romeo again replied, "If your hand, lady, feels the warmth of mine, my heart no less has kindled warm at your eyes." A short bright smile was the only answer to this, except that in a lower tone, as fearful of being seen or heard, she half whispered back, "I vow, O Romeo, there is no lady here, whom I think nearly so handsome as you seem to me." Fascinated by her sweet address, Romeo, with still greater warmth, replied, "Whatever I may be, I only wish you, sweet lady, to hold me ever at your service." When the festival broke up, and Romeo had re-

tired to his chamber, dwelling on the harsh usage of his former love, from whose eyes he had drunk softness mixed with too much scorn, he resolved to give his soul wholly, even to the fair foe of his father's house. She, on the other hand, had thought of little else since she left him, than of the supreme felicity she should enjoy in obtaining so noble a youth for her lord. Yet when she reverted to the deadly enmity which had so long reigned between the two houses, her fears overpowered the gentler feelings of her soul; and unable wholly to subdue them, she inveighed against her own folly in the following words: "Wretch that I am! what enchantment thus drags me to my ruin? without hope or guide, O! how shall I escape? for Romeo loves me not. Alas! he perhaps feels nothing but hatred against our house, and would perhaps only seek my shame. And were it possible he should think of taking me for his wedded wife, my father would never consent to bestow my hand." Then revolving other feelings in her mind, she flattered herself that their attachment might become the means of further reconciliation between the houses, even now wearied with their mutual feuds; and, "Oh!" she exclaimed, "what a blissful means of changing foes into relatives!" Fixed in this resolve, she again met Romeo

with eyes of softness and regard. Mutually animated with equal ardor and admiration, the loved image was fixed so deeply in their imagination, that they could no longer refrain from seeing each other; and sometimes at the windows and sometimes in the church, they sought with avidity every occasion to express their mutual passion through their eyes, and neither of them seemed to enjoy rest out of the presence of the beloved object. But chiefly, Romeo, fired at the sight of her exquisite charms and manners, braved all risks for the pleasure of having her near him; and he would frequently pass the greatest part of the night around her house, beneath her windows, or, scaling the walls, force his way to the balcony that commanded a view of her chamber, without the knowledge either of herself or others; and there he would sit for hours, gazing and listening his soul away, enamoured of her looks and voice. He would afterwards throw himself listlessly to sleep, careless of returning home, in the woods or in the roads. But one evening, as love would have it, the moon shining out more brightly than usual, the adventurous Romeo was discovered by his lady, as she opened the casement, on the balcony. Imagining that it might be some one else, he retreated, when catching a glimpse of his figure, she gently

called to him, "Wherefore, O Romeo, come you hither?"—"It is the will of love: therefore do I come," he replied. "And if you should be found here, Romeo, know you it will be sudden death?" "Too well I do, dear lady; and I doubt not it will happen so some night, if you refuse me your aid. But as I must at some time die, wherever I may be, I would rather yield my breath here as near you as I dare, with whom I would ever choose to live, did heaven and you consent." To which words the lady replied: "Believe me, Romeo, it is not I who would forbid thee to remain honourably at my side; it is thou, and the enmity thou and thine bear us, that stand between us twain." "Yet can I truly aver," replied the youth, "that the dearest hope I have long indulged, has been to make you mine; and if you had equal wishes, on you alone it would rest to make me for ever yours: no hand of man, believe me, love, should sunder us again." On saying this, they agreed on further means to meet again, and converse much longer some future evening; and they retired, full of each other, to rest.

The noble youth having frequently in this way held appointments with her, one winter's evening, while the snow fell thick and fast about him, he called to her from the usual spot: "Ah, Juliet,

Juliet! how long will you see me thus languishing in vain? Do you feel nothing for me, who through these cold nights, exposed to the stormy weather, wait on the cold ground to behold you?" "Alas, alas! I do indeed pity you," returned a sweet voice, "but what would you that I should do? often have I besought you to go away." "No, no," returned Romeo, "not away; and therefore, gentle lady, deign to give me refuge in your chamber, from these bitter winds." Turning towards him with a somewhat scornful voice, the lady reproached him: "Romeo, I love you as much as it is possible for woman to love; therefore it is that you ask me this; your worth has led me further than I ought to go. But cruel as you are, if you dream that you can enjoy my love by long prevailing suit, in the manner you imagine, lay such thoughts aside, for you deceive yourself, Montecchi. And as I will no longer see you nightly periling your life for me, I frankly tell you, Romeo, that if you please to take me as I am, I will joyfully become your wife, giving myself up wholly to your will, ready to follow you over the world wherever you may think best." "And this," replied the gentle youth, "is all I have so long wished; now then let it be done!" "So let it be, even as you will," cried Juliet; "only permit the friar Lo-

renzo da San Francesco, my confessor, first to knit our hands, if you wish me wholly and happily to become yours." "Am I to suppose, then, that friar Lorenzo, my love, is acquainted with the secret of your breast?" "Yes, Romeo," returned Juliet, "and he will be ready to grant us what we request of him:" and here, having fixed upon the proper measures, they again took leave of each other.

The friar, who belonged to the minor order of Osservanza, was a very learned man, well skilled no less in natural than in magical arts, and was extremely intimate with Romeo, in whom he had found it necessary to confide, on an occasion in which he might otherwise have forfeited his reputation, which he was very desirous of maintaining with the vulgar. He had fixed upon Romeo in his emergency, as the most brave and prudent gentleman he knew, to trust with the affair he had in hand. To him only he unbosomed his whole soul: and Romeo, having now recourse to him in his turn, acquainted him with his resolution of making the lovely daughter of Messer Antonio, as quickly as possible, his wedded wife, and that they had together fixed upon him as the secret instrument and witness of their nuptials, and afterwards as the medium of their reconciliation with her father.

The friar immediately signified his consent, no less because he ventured not to oppose or disoblige the lover, than because he believed it might be attended with happy results; in which case he would be likely to derive great honour from the heads of both houses, as the means of their reconciliation. In the meanwhile, it being the season of Lent, the fair Juliet, under semblance of going to confession, sought the residence of friar Francesco, and having entered into one of the confessionals made use of by the monks, she inquired for Lorenzo, who hearing her voice, led her along after Romeo into the convent. Then closing the doors of the confessional, he removed an iron grate which had hitherto separated her from her lover, saying: "I have been always glad to see you, my daughter; but you will now be far dearer to me than ever, if you wish to receive Messer Romeo here, as your husband." To which Juliet answered, that there was nothing she so much wished, as that she might lawfully become his wife; and that she had therefore hastened thither, in order that before Heaven and him, she might take those vows which love and honour required, and which the friar must witness, as her trust in him was great.

Then in the presence of the priest, who performed the ceremony under the seal of confession, Romeo

espoused the fair young Juliet: and having concluded how they were to meet each other again at night, exchanging a single kiss, they took leave of the friar, who remained in the confessional, awaiting the arrival of penitents. Having thus secretly obtained the object of their wishes, the youthful Romeo and his bride for many days enjoyed the most unalloyed felicity; hoping at the same time for a favourable occasion to become reconciled to her father, in acquainting him with their marriage. But fortune, as if envious of their supreme happiness, just at this time revived the old deadly feud between the houses in such a way, that in a few days, neither of them wishing to yield to the other, the Montecchi and the Cappelletti meeting together, from words proceeded to blows. Desirous to avoid giving any mortal hurts to his sweet wife's relatives, Romeo had the sorrow of beholding his own party either wounded or driven from the streets; and incensed with passion against Tebaldo Cappelletti, the most formidable of his adversaries, he struck him dead at his feet with a single blow, and put his companions to flight, terrified at the loss of their chief. The homicide had been witnessed by too many to remain long a secret, and the complaint being brought before the prince, the Cappelletti threw the

blame exclusively on Romeo, who was sentenced by the council to perpetual banishment from Verona. It is easier for those who truly love, to imagine, than it is here to describe, the sensations of the young bride on receiving these tidings. She wept long and bitterly, refusing to hear any consolation; and her grief was deepened by the reflection that she could share it with no one. Romeo, on the other hand, regretted leaving his country on her account alone; and, resolving to take a sorrowful farewell of the object of all his soul's wishes, he had again recourse to the assistance of the friar, who despatched a faithful follower of Romeo's father to apprize his wife of the time and place of meeting, and thither she eagerly repaired. Retiring together into the confessional, they there wept bitterly over their misfortune. The young bride at length, checking her tears, exclaimed in an accent of despair: "I cannot bear to live! What will my life be without you? Oh, let me fly with you; wherever you go I will follow, a faithful and loving servant. I will cast these long tresses away, and by none shall you be served so well, so truly, as by me." "No, never let it be said," replied Romeo, "that you accompanied me in other guise than in that of a cherished and honoured bride. Yet were it

not that, I feel assured that our affairs will soon improve, and that the strife between our two families will very shortly cease,, indeed I could not bear, my love, to leave you. We shall not long be divided, and my thoughts, sweet Juliet, will be ever with you. And should we not be quickly restored to each other, it will then be time to fix how we are to meet again." So, after having wept and embraced each other again and again, they tore themselves asunder, his wife entreating that he would remain as near her as possible, and by no means go so far as Rome or Florence.

After concealing himself for some time in the monastery of Friar Lorenzo, Romeo set out more dead than alive for Mantua, but not before he had agreed with the servant of the lady, that he was to be informed, through the friar, of every particular that might occur during his absence; and he further instructed the servant, as he valued his protection and rewards, to obey his wife in the minutest things which she might require of him. After her husband had departed, she gave herself up a prey to the deepest grief; a grief so incessant as to leave its traces on her beauty, and attract the attention of her mother. She tenderly loved her daughter, and affectionately inquiring into the cause of her affliction,

she merely received vague excuses in reply. "But you are always in tears, my daughter," she continued, "what is it that can affect you thus? tell me, for you are dear to me as my own life, and if it depend upon me, you shall no longer weep." Then imagining that her daughter might probably wish to bestow her hand in marriage, yet be afraid of avowing her wishes, she determined to speak to her husband on the subject; and thus, in the hope of promoting her health and happiness, she pursued the very means that led to her destruction.

She informed Messer Antonio that she had observed, for many days past, that something was preying on their daughter's mind, that she was no longer like the same creature, and that although she had used every means to obtain her confidence as to the source of her affliction, it had been all in vain. She then urged her suspicions that Juliet perhaps wished to marry, but that like a discreet girl, as she certainly was, she was averse to declare her feelings. "So I think, Messer Antonio, we had better, without more delay, make choice for our daughter of a noble husband. Juliet has already completed her eighteenth year, on Saint Euphemia's day; and when they have advanced much beyond this period, the beauty of women, so far from improving, is rather on the

wane. Besides," continued her mother, "it is not well to keep girls too long at home, though our Juliet has always been an excellent child. I am aware you have already fixed upon her dower, and we have nothing to do but to select a proper object for her love." Messer Antonic agreed with his lady, and highly commended the virtues and the prudence of his daughter. Not many days afterwards, they proposed and entered into a treaty of marriage between the Count of Lodrone and their daughter. When it was on the point of being concluded, the lady hoping to surprise her daughter with the agreeable tidings, bade her now rejoice, for that in a very few days she would be happily settled in marriage with a noble youth, and that she must no longer grieve, for it would take place with her father's consent, and that of all her friends.

On hearing these words, Juliet burst into a flood of tears, while her mother endeavoured to console her with the hope of being happily settled in life, within the course of eight days. "You will then become the wife of Count Lodrone; nay, do not weep, for it is really true: will you not be happy, Juliet, then?" "No, no, my dear mother, I shall never be happy." "Then what can be the matter with you? what do you want? Only tell me; I will do any thing you

wish." "Then I would wish to die, mother; nothing else is left me now." Her mother then first became aware that she was the victim of some deep-seated passion, and saying little more, she left her. In the evening she related to her husband what had passed, at which he testified great displeasure, saying that it would be necessary to have the affair examined into, before venturing to proceed further with the count. And fearful lest any blame might attach to his family, he soon after sent for Juliet, with the intention of consulting her on the proposed marriage: "It is my wish, my dear Juliet, to form an honorable connexion for you in marriage. Will you be satisfied with it?" After remaining silent for some moments, his daughter replied: "No, dear father, I cannot be satisfied." "Am I to suppose then, that you wish to take the veil, daughter,?" "Indeed I know not what,"——and with these words out gushed a flood of bitter tears. "But this I know," returned her father, "you shall give your hand to Count Lodrone; and therefore trouble yourself no further." "Never, never," cried Juliet, still weeping bitterly. On this Messer Antonio threatened her with his heaviest displeasure, did she again venture to dispute his will, commanding her immediately to reveal the cause of her unhappiness. And when he could

obtain no other reply than sobs and tears, he quitted the apartment in a violent passion, unable to penetrate into her motives, leaving her with her mother alone. The wretched bride had already acquainted the servant, entrusted with their secret, whose name was Pietro, with every thing which had passed between herself and her parents, taking him to witness that she would sooner die than become the wife of any lord but Romeo. And this the good Pietro had carefully conveyed through the friar to the ears of the banished man, who had written to her, encouraging her to persevere, and by no means to betray the secret of their love; as he was then taking measures, within less than ten days, to bear her from her father's house. Messer Antonio, and his lady Giovanni, being unable in the mean while, either by threats or kindness, to discover their daughter's objections to the marriage, or whether she was attached to another, determined to prosecute their design. "Weep no more, girl," cried her mother, "for married you shall be, though you were to take one of the Montecchi by the hand, which I am sure you will never be compelled to do." Fresh sobs and tears at these words burst from the poor girl, which only served to hasten the preparations for their daughter's nuptials. Her despair was terrible when she heard the day named,

and calling upon death to save her, she rushed out of her chamber, and repairing as fast as possible to the convent of the friar, in whom, next to Romeo, she trusted, and from whom she had received tidings of her husband, she revealed to him the cause of her anguish, often interrupted by her tears. She then conjured him, by the friendship and obligations which he owed to Romeo, to assist her in this her utter need. "Alas! of what use can I be," replied the friar, "when your two houses are even now so violently opposed to each other?"—"But I know, father, that you are a learned and experienced man, and you can assist me in many ways if you please. If you should refuse me every thing else, at least, however, grant me this. My nuptials are even now preparing in my father's palace; he is now gone out of the city to give orders at the villa on the Mantuan road, whither they are about to carry me, that I may there be compelled to receive the count, without a chance of opposition, as he is to meet me on my arrival at the place. Give me therefore poison, to free me, at once, from the grief and shame of exposing the wife of Romeo to such a scene. Give me poison, or I will myself plunge a dagger into my bosom."

The friar on hearing these desperate intentions, and aware how deeply he was implicated with Ro-

meo, who might become his worst enemy, were he not in some way to obviate the danger, turning to Juliet, said, "You know, my daughter, that I confess a great portion of the people here, and am respected by all; no testament, no reconciliation taking place without my mediation. I am therefore careful of giving rise to any suspicions which might affect me, and should especially wish to conceal my interference in an affair like the present. I would not incur such a scandal for all the treasure in the world. But as I am attached both to yourself and Romeo, I will exert myself in your favour, in such a way as I believe no one ever before did. You must first, however, take a vow that you will never betray to others the secret I now entrust you with."— "Speak, speak boldly, father," cried Juliet, "and give me the poison, for I will inform nobody."—"I will give you no poison," returned the friar: "young and beautiful as you are, it would be too deep a sin. But if you possess courage to execute what I shall propose, I trust I may be able to deliver you safely into the hands of Romeo. You are aware that the family vault of the Cappelletti lies beyond this church, in the cemetery of our convent. Now I will give you a certain powder, which, when you have taken it, will throw you into a deep slumber

of eight and forty hours, and during that time you will be to all appearance dead, not even the most skilful physicians being able to detect a spark of life remaining. In this state you will be interred in the vault of the Cappelletti, and at a fitting season I will be in readiness to take you away, and bring you to my own cell, where you can stay until I go, which will not be long, to the chapter; after which, disguised in a monk's dress, I will bear you myself to your husband. But tell me, are you not afraid of being near the corpse of Tebaldo, your cousin, so recently interred in the same place?" With serene and joyful looks the young bride returned, "No, father; for if by such means I can ever reach my Romeo, I would face not this alone, but the terrors of hell itself."—"This is well; let it be done," cried the friar; "but first write with your own hand an exact account of the whole affair to Romeo, lest by any mischance, supposing you dead, he may be impelled by his despair to do some desperate deed; for I am sure he is passionately attached to you. There are always some of my brethren who have occasion to go to Mantua, where your husband resides: let me have your letter to him, and I will send it by a faithful messenger."

Having said this, the good monk, without the in-

terference of whose holy order we find no matters of importance transacted, leaving the lady in the confessional, returned to his cell; but soon came back, bringing a small vase, with the powder in it, saying, "Drink this, mixed with simple water, about midnight, and fear not. In two hours after, it will begin to take effect, and I doubt not but our design will be crowned with success. But haste, and forget not to write the letter as I have directed you, to Romeo, for it is of great importance." Securing the powder, the fair bride hastened joyfully home to her mother, saying, "Truly, dear mother, Friar Lorenzo is one of the best confessors in the world. He has so kindly advised me that I am quite recovered from my late unhappiness." Overjoyed on perceiving her daughter's cheerfulness, the lady Giovanni replied, "And you shall return his kindness, my dear girl, with interest; his poor brethren shall never be in want of alms." Juliet's recovered spirits now banished every suspicion from the mind of her parents, of her previous attachment to another; and they believed that some unhappy incident had given rise to the strange and melancholy disposition they had observed. They would now have been glad to withdraw their promise of bestowing her hand upon the count, but they had already proceeded so far that they could not, with-

out much difficulty, retreat. Her lover was desirous that some one of his friends should see her; and her mother, Lady Giovanna, being somewhat delicate in her health, it was resolved that her daughter, accompanied by two of her aunts, should be carried to the villa, at a short distance from the city, a step to which she made no opposition. She accordingly went; and imagining that her father would, immediately on her arrival, insist upon the marriage, she took care to secure the powder given to her by the friar. At the approach of midnight, calling one of her favourite maids, brought up with her from her childhood, she requested her to bring her a glass of water, observing that she felt very thirsty; and as she drank it in the presence of the maid, and one of her aunts, she exclaimed that her father should never bestow her hand upon the count against her own consent. These simple women, though they had observed her throw the powder into the water, which she said was to refresh her, suspected nothing further, and went to rest. When the servant had retired with the light, her young mistress rose from her bed, dressed herself, and again lay down, composing her decent limbs as if she were never more to rise, with her hands crossed upon her breast, awaiting the dreaded result. In little more than two hours she lay to all appearance

dead; and in this state she was discovered the next morning. The maid and her aunt, unable to awake her, feeling that she was already quite cold, and recollecting the powder, the strange expressions she had used, and above all, seeing her dressed, began to scream aloud, supposing her to have poisoned herself. On this, the cries of her own maid, who loved her, were terrible. "True, too true, dear lady, you said that your father should never marry you against your will. Alas! you asked me for the very water which was to occasion your death. Wretch that I am! And have you indeed left me, and left me thus? With my own hands I gave you the fatal cup, which with yours, will have caused the death of your father, your mother, and us all. Ah, why did you not take me with you, who have always so dearly loved you in life!" And saying this she threw herself by the side of her young mistress, embracing her cold form. Messer Antonio hearing a violent uproar, hastened, trembling, to ascertain the cause, and the first object he beheld was his daughter stretched out in her chamber a corpse. Although he believed her gone beyond recovery, when he heard what she had drunk, he immediately sent to Verona for a very experienced physician, who having carefully observed and examined his daughter, declared that she had died

of the effects of the poison, more than six hours before.

The wretched father on hearing his worst fears confirmed, was overwhelmed with grief; and the same tidings reaching the distracted mother, suddenly deprived her of all consciousness. When she was at length restored, she tore her hair, and calling upon her daughter's name, filled the air with her shrieks: "She is gone! the only sweet solace of my aged days. Cruel, cruel, thou hast left me without even giving thy poor mother a last farewell! At least I might have drunk thy last words and sighs, and closed thine eyes in peace. Let my women come about me, let them assist me, that I may die! if they have any pity left, they will kill me; far better so to die than of a lingering death of grief. O God, in thy infinite mercy take me away, for my life will be a burden to me now!" Her women then came round her, and bore her to the couch, still weeping, and refusing all the consolation they could offer to her. The body of Juliet was, in the mean time, carried to Verona, and consigned with extraordinary ceremonies, amidst the lamentations of a numerous train of friends and relatives, to the vault, in the cemetery of San Francesco, where the last rites to the dead were discharged.

The friar having occasion to be absent from the city, had, according to his promise, confided Juliet's letter to Romeo to the hands of one of his brethren going to Mantua. On arriving he called several times at the house, without having the good fortune to meet with Romeo, and unwilling to trust such a letter to others, he retained it in his own hands, until Pietro, hearing of the death of Juliet, and not finding the friar in the city, resolved to bear the unhappy tidings to his master. He arrived in Mantua the following night, and meeting with Romeo, who had not yet received the letter from the priest, he related to him, with tears in his eyes, the death of his young bride, whose burial he had himself witnessed. The hue of death stole over the features of Romeo as he proceeded with the sad story; and drawing his sword, he was about to stab himself on the spot, had he not been prevented by force. "It is well," he cried, "but I shall not long survive the lady of my soul, whom I valued more than life. O Juliet, Juliet, it is thy husband who doomed thee to death! I came not, as I promised, to bear thee from thy cruel father, whilst thou, to preserve thy sweet faith unbroken, hast died for me; and shall I, through fear of death, survive alone? No, this shall never be." Then throwing a dark cloak which he wore, over Pietro's

shoulders, he cried, "Away, away, leave me!" Romeo closed the doors after him, and preferring every other evil to that of life, only considered the best manner of getting rid of it. At last, he assumed the dress of a peasant, and taking out a species of poison, which he had always carried with him, to use in case of emergency, he placed it under the sleeve of his coat, and immediately set out on his return to Verona. Journeying on with wild and melancholy thoughts, he now defied his fate, hoping to fall by the hands of justice, or to lay himself down in the vault by the side of her he loved, and die.

In this resolution, on the evening of the following day after her interment, he arrived at Verona, without being discovered by any one. The same night, as soon as the city became hushed, he resorted to the convent of the Frati Minori, where the tombs of the Cappelletti lay. The church was situated in the Cittadella, where the monks at that time resided, although, for some reason, they have since left it for the suburb of San Zeno, now called Santo Bernardino, and the Cittadella was formerly, indeed, inhabited by San Francesco himself. Near the outer walls of this place, there were then placed a number of large monuments such as we see round many churches, and beneath one of these was the ancient sepulchre of all

the Cappelletti, in which the beautiful bride then lay. Romeo approaching near, not long after midnight, and possessing great strength, removed the heavy covering by force, and with some wooden stakes which he had brought with him, he propped it up to prevent it from closing again, until he wished it; and he then entered the tomb, and replaced the covering. The lamp he carried cast a lurid light around, while his eyes wandered in search of the loved object, which, bursting open the living tomb, he quickly found. He beheld the features of the beautiful Juliet now mingled with a heap of lifeless dust and bones, on which a sudden tide of sorrow sprung into his eyes, and amidst bitter sobs he thus spoke: "O eyes, which while our loves to heaven were dear, shone sweetly upon mine! O sweeter mouth, a thousand and a thousand times so fondly kissed by me alone, and rich in honied words! O bosom, in which my whole heart lay treasured up, alas, all closed and mute and cold I find ye now! My hapless wife, what hath love done for thee, but led thee hither? And why so soon two wretched lovers perish? I had not looked for this, when hope and passion first whispered of other things. But I have lived to witness even this:" and he pressed his lips to her mouth and bosom, mingling his kisses with his tears. "Walls of the dead,"

he cried, "why fall ye not around me, and crush me into dust? Yet as death is in the power of all, it is a despicable thing to wish, yet fear it too." Then taking out the poison from under his vest, he thus continued: "By what strange fatality am I brought to die in the sepulchre of my enemies, some of whom this hand hath slain! But as it is pleasant to die near those we love, now, my beloved, let me die!" Then seizing the fatal vial, he poured its whole contents into his frame; and catching the fair body of Juliet in his arms in a wild embrace, "Still so sweet," he cried, "dear limbs, mine, only mine! And if yet thy pure spirit live, my Juliet, let it look from its seat of bliss to witness and forgive my cruel death; as I could not delighted live with thee, it is not forbidden me with thee to die:" and winding his arms about her, he awaited his final doom. The hour was now arrived when, the vital powers of the slumbering lady reviving, and subduing the icy coldness of the poison, she would awake. Thus straitly folded in the last embraces of Romeo, she suddenly recovered her senses, and uttering a deep sigh, she cried: "Alas! where am I? in whose arms, whose kisses? Oh, unbind me, wretch that I am! Base friar, is it thus you keep your word to Romeo, thus lead me to his arms?" Great was her hus-

band's surprise to feel Juliet alive in his embrace. Recalling the idea of Pygmalion, "Do you know me, sweet wife?" he cried, "It is your love, your Romeo; hither come to die with you. I came alone and secretly from Mantua, to find your place of rest." Finding herself within the sepulchre, and in the arms of Romeo, Juliet would not at first give credit to her senses; but springing out of his arms, gazed a moment eagerly on his face, and the next fell on his neck with a torrent of tears and kisses: "Oh, Romeo, Romeo, what madness brings you hither? Were not my letters which I sent you by the friar enough to tell you of my feigned death, and that I should shortly be restored to you?" The wretched youth, aware of the whole calamity, then gave a loose to his despair: "Beyond all other griefs that lovers ever bore, Romeo, thy lot has been! My life, my soul, I never had thy letters!" And he told her the piteous tale, which he had heard from the lips of her servant, and that concluding she was dead, he had hastened to keep her company, and had already drunk the deadly draught. At these last words, his unhappy bride uttering a wild scream, began to beat her breast and tear her hair, and then in a state of distraction, she threw herself by the side of Romeo, already lying on the ground, and

pouring over him a deluge of tears, imprinted her last kisses on his lips. All pale and trembling, she cried: "Oh, my Romeo! will you die in my sight, and I too the occasion of your death? Must I live even a moment after you? Ah, would that I could give my life for yours! Would that I alone might die!" In a faint and dying tone her husband replied: "If my love and truth were ever dear to you, my Juliet, live, for my sake live; for it is sweet to know that you will then be often thinking of him who now dies for you, with his eyes still fixed on yours." "Die! yes! you die for the death which in me was only feigned! What therefore should I do for this your real, cruel death? I only grieve that I have no means of accompanying you, and hate myself that I must linger on earth till I obtain them. But it shall not be long before the wretch who caused your death, shall follow you:" and uttering these words with pain, she swooned away upon his body. On again reviving, she felt she was catching the last breath which now came thick and fast from the breast of her husband.

Friar Lorenzo, in the meanwhile, aware of the supposed death and of the interment of Juliet, and knowing that the termination of her slumber was near, proceeded with a faithful companion, about

an hour before sun-rise, to the monument. On approaching the place he heard her sobs and cries, and saw the light of a lamp through an aperture in the sepulchre. Surprised at this, he imagined that Juliet must have secreted the light in the monument, and awaking and finding no one there, had thus begun to weep and bewail herself. But on opening the sepulchre with the help of his companion, he beheld the weeping and distracted Juliet holding her dying husband in her arms, on which he immediately said: "What! did you think, my daughter, I should leave you here to die?" To which she only answered with another burst of sorrow: "No! away! I only fear lest I should be made to live. Away, and close our sepulchre over our heads; here let me die. Or, in the name of pity, lend me a dagger, that I may strike it into my bosom, and escape from my woes. Ah, cruel father! well hast thou fulfilled thy promise, well delivered to Romeo his letters, and wed me, and borne me safely to him! See, he is lying dead in my arms:" and she repeated the fatal tale. Thunderstruck at these words, the friar gazed upon the dying Romeo, exclaiming with horror: "My friend, my Romeo! alas! what chance hath torn thee from us? Thy Juliet calls thee, Romeo, look up and hope. Thou art lying in her

beauteous bosom, and wilt not speak." On hearing her loved name, he raised his languid eyes, heavy with death, and fixing them on her for a short space, closed them again. The next moment, turning himself round upon his face, in a last struggle, he expired.

Thus wretchedly fell the noble youth, long lamented over by his fair bride, till on the approach of day, the friar tenderly inquired what she would wish to do? "To be left and to die where I am," was the reply. "Do not, daughter, say this, but come with me; for though I scarcely know in what way to proceed, I can perhaps find means of obtaining a refuge for you in some monastery, where you may address your prayers to heaven for your own and for your husband's sake." "I desire you to do nothing for me," replied Juliet; "except this one thing, which I trust, for the sake of his memory," pointing to the body of Romeo, "you will do. Never breathe a syllable to any one living of our unhappy death, that our bodies may rest here together for ever in peace. And should our sad loves come to light, I pray you will beseech both our parents to permit our remains to continue mingled together in this sepulchre, as in love and in death we were still one." Then turning again towards the body of Ro-

meo, whose head she held sustained upon her lap, and whose eyes she had just closed, bathing his cold features with her tears, she addressed him as if he had been in life: "What shall I now do, my dear lord, since you have deserted me? What can I do but follow you? for nothing else is left me: death itself shall not keep me from you." Having said this, and feeling the full weight of her irreparable loss in the death of her noble husband, resolute to die, she drew in her breath, and retaining it for some time, suddenly uttered a loud shriek, and fell dead by her lover's side. The friar perceiving that she was indeed dead, was seized with such a degree of terror and surprise, that, unable to come to any resolution, he sat down with his companion in the sepulchre, bewailing the destiny of the lovers. At this time some of the officers of the police, being in search of a notorious robber, arrived at the spot; and perceiving a light, and the sound of voices, they straightway ran to the place, and seizing upon the priests, inquired into their business. Friar Lorenzo recognizing some of these men, was overpowered with shame and fear; but assuming a lofty voice, exclaimed: "Back, sirs, I am not the man you take me for. What you are in want of, you must search for elsewhere." Their conductor then came forward, saying: "We wish to

be informed why the monument of the Cappelletti is thus violated by night, when a young lady of the family has been so recently interred here? And were I not acquainted with your excellent character, friar Lorenzo, I should say you had come hither to despoil the dead." The priests having extinguished the lamp, then replied: "We shall not render an account of our business to you; it is not your affair." "That is true," replied the other; "but I must report it to the prince." The friar, with a feeling of despair, then cried out: "Say what you please;" and closing up the entrance into the tomb, he went into the church with his companion.

The morning was somewhat advanced, when the friars disengaged themselves from the officers, one of whom soon related to the Cappelletti, the whole of this strange affair. They, knowing that friar Lorenzo had been very intimate with Romeo, brought him before the prince, entreating, that if there were no other means, he might be compelled by torture, to confess his reason for opening the sepulchre of the Cappelletti. The prince having placed him under a strict guard, proceeded to interrogate him, wherefore he had visited the tomb of the Cappelletti, as he was resolved to discover the truth. "I will confess every thing very freely," exclaimed the friar. "I was the confessor of

the daughter of Messer Antonio, lately deceased in so very strange a manner. I loved her for her worth, and being compelled to be absent at the time of her interment, I went to offer up certain prayers over her remains, which when nine times repeated by my beads, have power to liberate her spirit from the pangs of purgatory. And because few appreciate or understand such matters, the wretches assert that I went there for the purpose of despoiling the body. But I trust I am better known. This poor gown and girdle are enough for me; and I would not take a mite from all the treasures of the earth, much less the shrouds of the departed. They do me great wrong to suspect me of this crime." The prince would have been satisfied with this explanation, had it not been for the interference of other monks, who, jealous of the friar, and hearing that he had been found in the monument, examined further, and found the dead body of Romeo, a fact which was immediately made known to the prince, while still speaking to the friar. This appeared incredible to every one present, and excited the utmost amazement through the city. The friar, then, aware that it would be in vain further to conceal his knowledge of the affair, fell at the feet of his excellency, crying: "Pardon, oh pardon, most noble prince! I have said what is not truth, yet neither for any evil

purpose, nor for love of gain have I said it, but to preserve my faith entire, which I promised to two deceased and unhappy lovers." On this, the friar was compelled to repeat the whole of the preceding tale. The prince, moved almost to tears as he listened, set out with a vast train of people to the monument of the family, and having ordered the bodies of the lovers to be placed in the church of San Francesco, he summoned their fathers and friends to attend. There was now a fresh burst of sorrow springing from a double source. Although the parties had been the bitterest enemies, they embraced one another in tears: and the scene before them suddenly wrought that change in their hearts and feelings, which neither the threats of their prince, nor the prayers of their friends, had been able to accomplish. Their hatred became extinguished in the mingled blood of their unhappy children. A noble monument was erected to their memory, on which was inscribed the occasion of their death; and their bodies were entombed together with great splendor and solemnity, and wept over, no less by their friends and relatives, than by the whole afflicted city. Such a fearful close had the loves of Romeo and Juliet; such as you have heard, and as it was related to me by Pellegrino da Verona.

But whither art thou now fled, sweet piety and faith

in woman? What living instance could we boast of that truth, proved unto death, shown by Juliet to her Romeo? Can it be, that her praises shall not soon be sung by the most eloquent and gifted tongues? How many are there, who in these times, instead of falling by the side of their departed lovers, would have turned their thoughts only to obtaining others? For if I now behold them capable, against every obligation of fidelity and true service, of rejecting those who once were dear to them, when they become oppressed by fortune, what are we to believe their conduct would be, after their death? Unfortunate are the lovers of this age, who can never flatter themselves, either by long devoted service, or by yielding up their very lives, that their ladies will consent to die with them. They are rather on the other hand assured that they are no further objects of regard, than inasmuch as they devote themselves altogether to the good will and pleasure of their ladies.

Bernardo Illicini.

BERNARDO ILLICINI.

This writer is chiefly distinguished in the literary annals of his country, by his critical and philosophical labours, though, like Machiavelli, he acquired no little reputation by the production of a single novel, which attracted the regard and admiration of his contemporaries. It was esteemed by the author's Italian friends and contemporaries, from the nobleness and the beauty of its sentiments, as a somewhat singular exception to the usual tenor of the Italian novels; more especially of such as turn upon the attachment of lovers. For a similar reason, perhaps, it has been well entitled "A very rare instance of magnanimity and courtesy that took place between two noble gentlemen of Sienna; with a very interesting disputation upon the same between three young ladies who heard it related." If we ought to form our estimate rather from merit than from number, this writer will be found justly entitled to rank among the more select novelists of his age. He sprung from the noble family of the Lapini, in Sienna, tracing its origin to Montalcino, a city of the Siennese territo-

ries, and he is variously mentioned under the names of Illicini, Ollicino, or Licinio. Very few particulars of his life have been handed down to us, such notices as we meet with in Ugurgieri being extremely scanty. It has been ascertained, however, that he was the son of Pietro Lapini, but we are ignorant of the precise period of his birth, as well as of his decease. Yet on the authority of Poggiali we learn, that he most probably flourished towards the latter half of the fifteenth century, at which period he was regarded as one of the most learned philosophers of his day. Such, likewise, was his skill in the practice of medicine, that, influenced by his great reputation, Gio. Galeazzo, Duke of Milan, invited him to the office of his court physician, in which he continued for some time. Subsequently he entered into the service of Borso da Este, Duke of Ferrara, where he filled the first chair of medicine in that city, with equal distinction and success. Intimate with the most distinguished scholars and men of science, who adorned the same period, he also engaged in some of the most abstruse controversies of the times, in which he proved himself so redoubtable a disputant, that, worsted in argument, his enemies had more than once recourse to arms; from which he was only protected by the favour of the duke. He seems, how-

ever, to have been most intimately acquainted with Ammannati Piccolomini, cardinal of Pavia, who informs our author, in one of his letters from Constantinople, of the tremendous vow that had just been taken by the Grand Signor, to use his utmost exertions to exterminate Christianity from the world. Among his critical works may be enumerated his comment upon the "Triumphs" of Petrarch, which he dedicated to his patron, Duke Borso. Of this, the most ancient edition is said by Poggiali to have been published in Vicenza, in fol. 1474; and afterwards along with the "Canzoniere" of Petrarch, accompanied with other commentaries. The style, both of this and the other works of Illicini, partakes of the faults peculiar to his age; an age greatly inferior in character to the preceding one, when earlier writers piqued themselves upon the classic taste and simplicity of their language. Yet he did not so wholly devote himself, like many others, to the cultivation of the Latin tongue, as to neglect the softer graces of Italian verse, in which he produced various poetical specimens, much admired in their day. Some of these were published in Venice by Giorgio de' Rusconi, 8vo. 1508, together with those of Cesare Torto, Augustino da Urbino, and Niccolo Salimbeni of Sienna.

Among the various editions of the novel here mentioned, Poggiali, to whom we are last of all indebted for its re-appearance, enumerates only three, all of which are extremely rare. Two of them formed part of the Borromeo collection, and are enumerated in the valuable catalogue of the count's library; the one is without date, printed in 8vo., and the other bears that of Venice, 1515, also in 8vo. by Giorgio de' Rusconi. Yet no mention of the work appears in Haym's Bibliotheca Italiana, any more than in other bibliographers, a circumstance that still further confirms the extreme rarity of these editions. The one first produced at Sienna, pronounced the most genuine by Poggiali, and which was revised and corrected by his hand, with the most scrupulous care and judgment, has been adopted as the model of the following translation. Nor do we deem ourselves lightly indebted to Signor Poggiali, whose accuracy and diligence of research at once presented us with, and improved the original production, by freeing it from those errors, both of orthography and language, with which all the earlier editions too much abounded. We cannot refrain, in conclusion, from presenting the reader with a beautiful sonnet, prefixed by the author to the argument of his work.

SONETTO.

O tu che leggerai l'opera mia
Studia ogni ingiuria voler perdonare,
Ed oltre a questo mai non indugiare
D 'usar sempre a ciascuno cortesia.

Anselmo Salimben ti fe la via,
E Carlo Montanin non sa restare
Di render cambio del bene operare,
Che dette ad altri Angelica in balia.

Ogni animo gentil ben volontieri
Perdona, e rende sempre ben per male,
Ne mai consente a nullo stran pensieri.

Se vuoi salire a le superne scale,
Pensa che Cristo pregò pe' Guidei,
Ed appo lui quanto 'l perdonar vale.

BERNARDO ILLICINI.

NOVELLA I.

Upon occasion of the celebration of the late splendid and happy nuptials, the tables were no sooner removed, than the fair guests, sensible of the chilness of the season, drew their seats closer around the fire. There they continued to converse upon a variety of pleasing and appropriate topics, until they happened unanimously to agree in the following opinion: that no qualities shine more conspicuously in a noble character than those of courtesy, gratitude, and generosity. These words were no sooner uttered, than a very pleasing and matronly looking lady observed: "The very excellent sentiment, my dear ladies, that has just been advanced, reminds me of some incidents which are known to have occurred between two young gentlemen belonging to this city, both of noble birth, like yourselves; the one sprung from the powerful house of the Salimbeni, and the other from the splendid family of Montanini. The name of the former was Anselmo di Messer Salimbene, that of the

latter, Carlo di Messer Tommaso; and as they will serve to illustrate, by their respective conduct and courtesies observed towards each other, the opinion we have just adopted, if you will consent to give me your thoughts upon the story, I will relate it just as it passed." Here the whole of her lovely audience gladly expressed their assent, uniting at the same time in the warmest thanks: upon which, with a highly gratified air, the good-natured lady proceeded:—It would seem as if some degree of imperfection were inherent in all created things, insomuch that it has become a general opinion, that nothing short of the Creator himself, is perfect, as we clearly gather, indeed, from the many great and powerful families, governments, and empires, in all of which men are very far from being satisfied with their lot. And never, perhaps, was this more fully exemplified than in the said families of the Salimbeni and Montanini: for several members of both of them, happening once to be present at a grand hunt, and a dispute arising as to the courage of their respective dogs, in the destruction of a ferocious boar, after many angry words on both sides, one of the Montanini fiercely smote a gentleman of the Salimbeni party, who fell dead at his feet. Hence arose a long and deadly feud between the two families, during which

that of the Montanini was reduced to the utmost peril and distress. After a considerable lapse of years, when their hatred had been somewhat subdued by time, it fell out, that about the year 1395, the sole remaining representative of the Montanini family was Carlo di Messer Tommaso, who had a sister about fifteen years old, whose name was Angelica, for she truly appeared to possess more of the angel than the mortal in her face and form.

After all the losses of his family, Carlo was still in possession of a beautiful estate in Val di Strove, worth at least a thousand florins; and upon this he contrived, with some difficulty, to support his sister, and maintain some vestige of the decayed splendour of their ancestors. And while he thus continued to display the nobility of his birth, rather by his manners and conversation, than by any external show of pomp, Anselmo, the rival of his house, had extended his possessions, and resided within a short distance of Carlo. In this way he first beheld the lovely Angelica, and finding the sweetness and elegance of her manners to surpass even the beauty of her person, he gradually and almost inadvertently became attached to her. Yet, on account of the enmity that had so long subsisted between the families, which, though it had ceased from acts of decided aggression,

had never given place to renewed intercourse, he cautiously concealed his passion, even from his most intimate friends. About this period, one of the most powerful citizens in the state becoming desirous of adding Carlo's little patrimony to his own domains, applied for the purchase of it, offering him the sum of a thousand ducats. But he refused to listen to the proposal, as well on account of its being the last remaining seat of his ancestors, as from its affording a subsistence for his sister : he himself having never been instructed in commerce, or any branch of the mechanic arts. Irritated at this refusal, the disappointed citizen laid a plot against Carlo, in which, by the vilest intrigues, he succeeded in rendering him suspected by the government, accusing him of a conspiracy, which led to his immediate arrest. And had it not been for the affected humanity of his betrayer, who, the better to succeed in his purpose, commuted his sentence for a thousand florins, he would instantaneously have suffered death. These were to be paid, however, within fifteen days ; and the former sentence, in case of failure, was to be executed without further appeal. On finding himself reduced to such extreme necessity, and unable to provide the amount of the fine by any other means, Carlo sent word by one of the city brokers

to the wily citizen, that he was desirous of disposing of his property, even at a thousand florins, the sum for which he had been unjustly condemned. But, more avaricious than prudent, his relentless enemy, believing that he had him now in his power, would offer no more than seven hundred for what he formerly wished to give a thousand. When the commissioner brought back this answer, Carlo, incensed at his cupidity, and reflecting that it was all upon which his unhappy sister had to rely in the world, came to the noble resolution of dying innocently, and reserving what he could for her, rather than by reducing her to poverty, endanger her honour and that of his house.

With this view, having sent his commissioner away, he quietly awaited the period of his doom, expecting little from his maternal relatives, who though wealthy, were unwilling to move in an affair, in which he had been pronounced guilty of a conspiracy against the state, and by which they might bring down suspicion upon themselves. The term fixed for his execution, therefore, being arrived, it happened that on the very morning he was to suffer, his more powerful neighbour and ancient rival, Anselmo, in going from his villa, passed near Carlo's house, whence he observed several women coming

out, apparently in profound grief and lamentation. Upon making further inquiry, he was informed that the brother of one of the young ladies was that day condemned to suffer death, in consequence of his inability to pay a fine of a thousand florins, and the last of the fifteen days allowed him had just expired. Possessed at once of a noble and intelligent mind, Anselmo directly penetrated into Carlo's motives for refusing to save his life, out of regard to his sister's interest and safety, and learning exactly the circumstances in which he was placed, he retired to his own house, in order to reflect upon the course he should pursue. Closing the door of his study, he proceeded to revolve the following reasons in his mind, observing to himself: "The time is at length come when Fortune is about to present a stronger temptation to my honour, than even my own passions have ever done. Carlo Montanini, whose family has so long borne a mortal hatred to my house, is at last found guilty, even unto death, by our republic; and my revenge, and that of my injured ancestors, is at its climax. But more than this, happy Anselmo!" he continued, "awaits thee now. For since thou hast unwittingly made thyself a slave to the bright beauties of a poor girl, here an occasion offers for suing to her, at length, upon thine own terms; as

her brother's head will no sooner be laid in the dust, than she will become a dependent creature, and more easily inclined to listen to all thy wishes. Welcome Fortune, then, with a bold and joyous spirit; let her have her way, and let Carlo be numbered with the dead!" But suddenly checking himself, he cried: "Ah! wretch that I am! that such thoughts should find a place in my soul. Shame light upon me, if I blush not to indulge them. Do I not well know that there are only two courses for kind and magnanimous spirits to pursue—the one, to revenge every injury, however slight or great, by one's own hand; the other, to show more magnanimity, by wholly despising and forgiving the author of it? The former of these I have already neglected to do, and the latter I am about to omit, though it is yet in my power. Have I not, moreover, seen, ungrateful as I am, how the sweet Angelica has forgiven all the calamities heaped upon her by our house, has always expressed the gentlest and noblest sentiments, and always shewn me the forgiving kindness and manners of a suffering angel. No! shame to my noble birth, were I capable of beholding such a one deserted, and deprived of her dearest relative, a fond and only brother; when a few paltry florins would restore him again to her happy bosom. To know this, and

to neglect it, would be to exhibit the meanness of the most avaricious of wretches, rather than the bearing of a gentleman. And what if her family once injured mine? would it not still be better and nobler far, to display the conduct of a reasonable being, not of an unrelenting and savage foe? Her brother never insulted me; it is enough that his ancestors paid the price of the wrong they wrought. If I may indeed boast myself of honourable birth, and favoured by fortune, I ought not to prove myself unworthy of both, by forgetting those who are in want of the latter."

Upon uttering these last words, Anselmo had already adopted the virtuous resolution of assisting the unhappy Carlo, and snatching up the sum of a thousand gold ducats, he hastened with them to the chamberlain appointed to receive the fines of condemned prisoners: "Behold," he said, "a thousand gold ducats to pay the fine owing by Carlo Montanini; be quick, and give me a receipt, that he may be restored, ere yet too late, to his liberty." And he even refused to take the difference between the ducats and the thousand florins, in order to be more speedily furnished with a ticket from the chamberlain to procure Carlo's release. This being done, he mounted his horse, and proceeded back to his

own villa, while a domestic, on whom he could rely, hastened to deliver to the governor of the prison the receipt of the money paid, who, as soon as he received it, ordered Carlo to be brought into his presence. The latter, supposing it was the confessor who had arrived to prepare him for his final hour, inquired of the governor the reason of his summons. "I summon you, Carlo," said the other, "to witness the order for your release, which I hold here in my hand; the prison doors are no longer closed upon you; to go or stay remains wholly at your own pleasure." Overwhelmed with wonder and delight at these words, Carlo stood fixed to the spot like a statue. "By whose means," he at length faintly uttered, "am I become free?" Pleading total ignorance of this, the governor could merely state, that a servant had waited upon him with the receipt, but whose he could not tell. In equal ignorance, Carlo, leaving the prison, returned home, where, not arriving until towards midnight, he found the entrance closed: but hearing his sister's voice loud in lamentation, he exclaimed, in a tone of affectionate surprise: "Let me come in, my dear Angelica; it is your brother Carlo who calls." Seized with the utmost surprise and joy, she flew to the door, and felt herself clasped in her brother's arms,

a brother she had just been mourning for, as dead. Several of her young friends, who had hastened to her in these unhappy moments, now participated in her joy, pointing out Carlo to their relations, as he who had been lost, but was now found, the prisoner liberated from his doom. At these tidings the house of Carlo was soon filled with friends and relatives, such as they had shown themselves, who part excusing and part congratulating one another, were nevertheless compelled to confess, that to none of their efforts was Carlo indebted for relief. He could with difficulty refrain from an expression of contempt and surprise on hearing what he could so ill have believed, and thought it ages until he should be able to discover the author of his renewed existence.

Early the next morning, then, he proceeded to the chamberlain before mentioned, inquiring, with as much indifference as he could assume, if he happened to know the person who had advanced the thousand florins. "Messer Carlo," replied the other, "I believe I can satisfy you: Anselmo di Messer Salimbene it was, who called and paid a thousand florins here for you yesterday, insisting on your immediate release. Moreover, he would not even stop to receive the difference, observing that it was your wish to pay in full a thousand gold ducats; but if you now wish

to receive the surplus, it is here at your service." "If this be so," replied Carlo, "the affair is all right; I am come for no kind of restitution," and he took his leave.

"Is not this a little strange?" he observed, as he walked homewards: "what can be the object of it? I must think of this." Then recalling Anselmo's manner towards his sister when they had happened to meet, it struck him that there was something peculiar in it, though he had never thought of it before; and again recurring to their long and fatal enmity, he could discover nothing by which he himself could have given occasion for so very unexpected and generous a return. Gifted as he was, with equal penetration and discretion, he then concluded that nothing less than a devoted passion for his sister could account for such an instance of liberality on Anselmo's part; and the more so, as he knew that in noble and well governed minds such a passion is kept more under the control of prudence, grace, and courtesy, displaying its strength only in the noblest acts. Feeling assured, therefore, that Anselmo had restored him to life for the sake of Angelica, he felt, also, that both his own and that of Angelica ought to remain at the future disposal of their benefactor, who, though their ancient foe, had watched over

them like a guardian angel, when the world and their friends had deserted them. Under the impression of these feelings he longed for an interview with Anselmo at Sienna, before communicating his sentiments to any other person, except his own sister.

As soon, therefore, as he knew their benefactor had returned to the city, he went to his sister Angelica, and taking her aside, thus addressed her: "I am sure I need not repeat to you, dear Angelica, how deeply I have been afflicted, whenever I recalled to mind the lost fortunes of our house, our own sufferings, and the difficulties with which we have so long had to contend. Still it would be a far heavier grief for me to think, that we had in any way degenerated in spirit from the honour of our family; a family that was never accused of yielding to any other, however rich and powerful, in point of courtesy and a generous return of such favours as it might have received. But fortune having at length deprived us of this power, while one of the greatest of obligations has just been conferred upon us, we may truly consider our situation as one of the most trying and unhappy, whatever path we choose to pursue. For without the sudden interposition of our benefactor, I must instantly have perished, and your own safety and honour been exposed to the most imminent

risk. This benefactor, whose courtesy and generosity rescued us from destruction, is no other than Anselmo di Messer Salimbene, who regardless of the ancient enmity and wrongs heaped upon him by our house, even to the murder of one of his ancestors, has paid a thousand ducats, and restored me to life and liberty, solely out of affection for you. But alas, in what manner can we make an adequate return for such an obligation? What is left for us, if we do not wish to exhibit to the world one of the most glaring instances of ingratitude, and to crouch before our benefactor with the feeling of a dependant and of a slave—what is left for us, but to throw ourselves upon his mercy, to place you in his power, and, leaving you at his disposal, (as I doubt not his honor and humanity,) thus grant him an ample return for all the benefits conferred upon us? I am convinced he loves you, and you will every day become more dear to him, if you shew yourself capable of making the greatest sacrifices for him, of relying fully and devotedly upon his heart and honour. When we reflect, moreover, that he might have permitted me to perish, in order to render you an easier victim to his arts; and that, scorning the prospect of thus obtaining you, he restored me to your arms, I shall feel ashamed to appear in his presence, and I will fly for ever from

my native place, even from Italy, if you consent not to my proposal. I would prefer death to the continual sense of such an obligation, and from the enemy of our father's house! What! would I remain here to be pointed at as 'that Carlo Montanini, the first of his family who ever owed his life, or the smallest obligation to one of the Salimbeni, who has now not only saved his life, but paid for him a thousand gold florins, without a chance of obtaining them again!' And it is indeed impossible for us to restore them; we are barely enabled to support ourselves, and you must be aware, that we shall be considered by him as the most ungrateful of wretches, if you do not permit me to reward him with yourself." Here Carlo ceased, while, her face covered with tears and blushes, stood the trembling Angelica, equally terrified at the idea of losing him, and of sanctioning the passion of one whom she had hardly yet learned to love. "Ah, brother," she cried, "how little did I imagine when I clasped you in my arms, after believing you dead, that fortune could still thus cruelly persecute us! Wretch that I am, to have lived to hear all you have said; far, far more bitter, than all the injuries borne by our ancestors. So young, so very young too as I am, you know I could never bear to lose you, that I have never had any will but yours. Then pity me,

and do not take advantage of the cruel situation in which I am placed, my dear and only brother, the last support and solace I have left. Yet I will do every thing, yes, every thing in the world you can ask of me—but make myself so very wretched, so worthless in my own eyes, and without knowing that I can even love the object of your choice. O better at once to die, than live in such perpetual fear and torment, as I am sure I should do by becoming the companion of one whom I have not yet learned to esteem. Yes, would that I had died when my poor mother died; closing at my birth these eyes, that have shed so little light of pleasure upon others, but so many silent and bitter tears. Indeed, when I think of all we have suffered, it signifies little what becomes of me; and after all your kindness, rather than bear the loss of you, if you could really have the heart to desert me, I will go whithersoever, I will become whatsoever, best pleases you. Yet, when you shall have made me the property of another, my life will afterwards be at my own disposal, and I would most willingly sacrifice it to discharge the obligations you owe, while I observe what is due to my own honour." Here relapsing into a flood of tears, mingled with stifled sighs and sobs, the unhappy girl ceased; when her brother, little less

affected than herself, strove to give her comfort in the following words:—"My best and sweetest Angelica, wherefore do you afflict yourself thus? Had I been one of the harshest and most unkind of brothers, instead of preferring, as I did, rather to lay down my life, than expose your safety and honour by leaving you dependant upon a pitiless world, you could hardly complain more bitterly than you do. And what have we to dread, when we recall to mind the delicacy and nobleness of feeling that has hitherto marked the whole conduct of Anselmo towards us both; when he did not even let us know the singular kindness and obligation he so lately conferred upon us? It is an appeal to our gratitude, that we cannot and ought not to disregard, and in what other manner can we notice or return it, but by an equal appeal to his honour;—by placing unlimited confidence in him, who scorned to take advantage of our situation, though under the strongest temptation; but by restoring an only brother to his sister, deprived himself of the power and opportunity of indulging his passion for her? From such a passion, I trust, there is little to dread; and, by the spirit of our ancestors, I will never consent to be outshone in an act of courtesy and liberality, and by a Salimbeni, though both our lives and honour were to be the forfeit. Then dry up

your tears, my noble hearted sister, and believe that an enemy, capable of so disinterested an act of kindness towards us, will never give us cause to repent, or abuse, by making you unhappy, the trust we are about to place in him. At all events, my best Angelica, if you love me, consent to accompany me this evening to his house, and let us convince him, that, though we cannot submit to such excessive obligations, we can act as kindly and generously as himself."

About nightfall, therefore, he proceeded with his sister towards Anselmo's villa, and inquiring of the porter, on his arrival at the gate, whether his master was at home, they were immediately admitted. But what was Anselmo's astonishment, upon entering the room, to behold Carlo and his beautiful sister: he was unable to utter a word, until her brother, taking him aside, begged to speak to him in another apartment. Signifying his assent to this, Anselmo conducted him through a noble suite of rooms, and, dismissing his servant, requested, with some degree of embarrassment, to know his pleasure. "Noble sir," replied Carlo, "I believe I am debtor for this poor life of mine, to your mercy and compassion; no less than my dear sister, who owes every thing she possesses to the same generous hand. Were our family what it once was, we should have rejoiced to return

the obligations you have conferred upon us as we ought; but as we are possessed of little beyond our daily subsistence, we are so unfortunate as to have nothing to offer you in return, beyond our poor selves. By restoring the forfeited life which we were unable to purchase, you have truly rendered us your property, and it is in your power to dispose of us as you please. Whatever our misfortunes may have been, we would not willingly add ingratitude to the account: there yet burns within us some spark of our ancestral spirit, ambitious of discharging the debt we owe, with our best services and with our lives. Do not scruple, therefore, as we are your slaves, to make use of us for your profit or your pleasure, as you deem fit."

Upon concluding these words, without awaiting a reply, Carlo left the room, and hastened home. What were Anselmo's emotions of surprise and joy to behold him depart alone! Doubting whether he could believe his senses, he was almost overwhelmed with the conflict of his feelings, when he beheld her seated in the saloon where he had left her: her whom he had so long and passionately loved. Surely she must have consented, he thought, to accompany her brother, and was no longer insensible to his passion. Yet deep grief and wretchedness seemed depicted in

her beautiful countenance, and made a holy appeal to the heart. He gazed upon her with the most intense interest and emotion, unable to utter a word, continuing long absorbed in these feelings, as if awed into silence by the charm of her sudden appearance, and by the exquisite grace and loveliness of her person. In this manner they sat, Anselmo, still gazing upon her with a variety of contending feelings, for some length of time, without either uttering a syllable, while Angelica betrayed her confusion and distress, by attempting to stifle the sobs that escaped from her, hiding her face in her hands. Unwilling to behold this, Anselmo, having adopted his resolution, left the room; and, in a few minutes, Angelica found herself surrounded by some of his female relatives; while he sent off his servants, in various directions, to summon several of his most particular friends: acquainting them, at the same time, that he had a matter of the utmost importance to consult them upon.

In the course of an hour a pretty numerous party being assembled, Anselmo requested them to give him the honour of their company to a friend's house, and sending the same request to Angelica and the ladies, he led them towards the mansion of Carlo Montanini. How much was Angelica surprised, on

their arrival, to hear Anselmo inquire for her brother, who shortly afterwards made his appearance at the gate, saying, "Signor, what are your commands?" "Carlo," replied the other, "you called upon me, not very long ago, begging to speak with me in private, and I now return your call, desirous of conversing with you before all this honourable company." "Signor," said Carlo, "I am prepared to obey you in every thing;" and then inviting the whole party in, he led the way to his principal hall, where all being seated, Anselmo addressed them in the following noble manner:—"My very kind and dear friends, sweet ladies, and noble citizens, I doubt not you are all intent upon the meaning of this visit, and not a little curious to hear my motives for so unusual a proceeding, almost unprecedented on the part of ourselves or our ancestors. But the importance of the occasion required it; and I wished to convince as many of my friends as possible, that it is not always in the power of fortune to tarnish the splendour of sterling merit, and true nobility of mind; that superior to riches, power, and pomp, these are qualities that may still shine conspicuously forth; while, without them, what alas, are nobility, glory, and pride of birth? The truth of this has, I am happy to say, even now been beautifully displayed in the conduct of Carlo and Angelica Montanini, whose surpassing

grace and courtesy of manners, whose liberality and gratitude, under the most trying circumstances, have triumphed over their adverse lot, and fully shewn the nobility of their minds to be equal to that of their descent. Pity it is, that mine ancestors should so long have borne enmity against spirits of such a stamp; should have despoiled them of their native honours and possessions, and exposed them to the injuries of fortune, and to the machinations of designing men. Had a Carlo and Angelica sooner appeared, much family discord and unhappiness might have been prevented. As it is, you must now learn how long and ardently I have cherished an affection for the sister of Carlo, the beautiful Angelica, whom you have so kindly accompanied hither. Her worth, her gentleness and accomplishments, all her virtues and noble qualities, are too well appreciated and beloved, to create the least surprise, when I declare myself one of her earliest and most devoted admirers. Yet it was only the sagacious mind of Carlo that penetrated my secret, long concealed even from the object of my regard: and it is hardly worth while to repeat the recent circumstances that brought it to light. Enough to say, that Carlo imagined he owed every thing he possessed, even his life, to my influence, and that acting under this impression, as he had already concluded upon sacrificing himself for his dear sister's

sake, so in the height of his gratitude and noble-minded courtesy, he believed they ought both to sacrifice themselves for mine. Noble instance of generosity! Because I had restored so noble a spirit, an only brother (a common duty) to his sister's bosom, he, knowing I must be passionately attached to her, surrendered both her and his own services into my hands, willing rather to become my victims, than to live free under the sense of unrequited favours, though unknown to any but themselves. Thus it was not the world they feared; they risked together their peace of mind, and their reputation; but they feared only the silent reproaches of their benefactor. For they knew I was ambitious of making Angelica mine, beyond the dearest object I ever pursued; but the moment she was placed in my power, I restored her, without even addressing to her a single word, to the arms of her brother, as you have seen; and I am now here to entreat of him and of all of you, to use your best influence with that lady, that she will sometime, should I be esteemed worthy, permit me to call her by the honoured name of wife." Carlo here expressing an entire obedience to his wishes, and the whole party uniting with him in pressing his sister to accept Anselmo's hand, the ladies drew her forward, while her lover, taking out three rich diamond rings,

approached, and placed one of them upon her finger, espousing her in the presence of them all. Then turning to the spectators, he continued: "Methinks it would ill beseem the splendour of my Angelica's beauty, of her virtues and her rank, to receive her dowerless into the family of the Salimbeni, the ancient foe of her house; but now, I trust, for ever united with it in bonds of lasting amity and love. Be witness, therefore, for me, my gentle and courteous friends, that I here endow her with one fourth of the whole of my possessions, apportioning, likewise, the same share to my dear and only brother, Carlo, for his sole benefit and use."

As he concluded these words, loud murmurs of applause and heartfelt approbation ran through the assembly, each vieing with the rest in congratulations to the happy parties, whose disinterested virtues and generosity merited so rich a return. The marriage contract having been drawn out and signed, Anselmo, accompanied by the same honourable train of friends, reconducted his lovely bride into the mansion of his ancestors, where, after partaking of a rich repast, he dismissed them with many thanks; though not without giving them a fresh invitation to meet again on the following Sunday, at his ancestral villa.

Novels of Alessandro Sozzini.

ALESSANDRO SOZZINI.

Alessandro Girolamo Sozzini,* is perhaps one of the least known among the Italian writers of fiction, and is certainly not to be placed in competition with some of the most distinguished either of his own or a preceding age. He will, nevertheless, afford us one or two specimens, remarkable rather for their lightness and variety than for any great degree of interest or novelty attaching to the subject. His stories, for the most part, indeed, are rather selected than original, many of them consisting of jests and anecdotes, along with all the good points he could meet with, both in preceding and contemporary authors, from whom, like many others, he pirated with very little ceremony: good stories appearing to have

* The work from which we have contrived to select the few novels that follow, is entitled, "Raccolta di burle, facezie, motti, e buffonerie di tre uomini Senesi, cioè di Salvadore di Topo Scarpellino, di Jacomo alias Scacazzone, e di Marianotto Securini, fattore dell' opera del duomo di Siena: poste insieme da Alessandro di Girolamo Sozzini, gentiluomo Senese, per passar tempo e per fuggire l'ozio."—8vo. without date: Sienna.

been the common property of all. His collection, which was first published at Sienna, without date, in 8vo., but, sometime, as we learn from Poggiali, towards the close of the sixteenth century, is now very rarely to be met with.

Although by no means possessing the genuine characteristics of the Italian novel, such a production may, perhaps, be entitled to rank in the numerous list of those that are known to furnish a few occasional good tales, and hints to other writers, amidst an abundance of very inferior and very exceptionable matter. In its native garb, the work is chiefly worth attention, on account of the ease and simplicity of its style, and the somewhat *naïve* and artless manner with which, in addition to the liveliness of the subject, the anecdotes are introduced. We are informed, upon the authority of Poggiali, that besides his *Raccolta di Burle*, &c. Sozzini likewise produced a Pastoral, in five long acts, and in *terza rima;* and it is stated by the above author to have been included in his own collection, with the following title:—*Bisquilla egloga pastorale di Maggio del Signor Alessandro Sozzini, &c.* 1588, 8vo.

More ample notices relating to the life and works of this writer, are said to have perished in one of those terrific earthquakes that last afflicted, with

other and much more serious loss to all ranks of inhabitants, the city of Sienna. His name has frequently been confounded with that of two other authors, both bearing the name, also, of Alessandro, mentioned by Ugurgieri, who, on the other hand, takes no kind of notice of the novelist.

ALESSANDRO SOZZINI.

NOVELLA I.

The wife of the good citizen Dore having lately been confined to the house, her kind-hearted husband went out to purchase a couple of capons for her, though he had not to boast even the value of a brass farthing in his pocket. But bent upon his purpose, he turned his steps towards the market-place, where he found a jolly countryman, who shewed him a fine fat pair of birds, for which he had the modesty to ask him only six livres. To this demand Dore replied, "Come, then, to save trouble, I will give you five;" and after some little demur, it was a bargain. Then seizing his prize, Dore said to the honest man, "Just come a little way along with me; you shall have your money in a moment." So turning into the church of San Martino, in their way, they found the prior busily engaged in confessing a young woman, and Dore said to the countryman, "Wait here a moment, for I wish to shew them to our friar, as they are for his table; and I will tell him to pay

you the five livres as soon as he shall have done confessing that woman." Soon after, approaching the prior, he whispered in his ear: "Holy father, you will do me a great service by confessing a poor sinner, a gossip of mine, who stands there;" and he pointed him out with his hand. "Poor wretch, he has never been at confession, during the space of five years, and now he cannot find a priest that will hear him. Oh, bestow this special charity upon him; let him not go away, as he came, but bid him wait until you have dismissed the lady, and speak a word of comfort to him!" "Well," said the friar, addressing the rustic, "brother, you may tarry a little; I will attend to you directly." Upon hearing this, Dore again said to the countryman, "When he has confessed the lady, he will pay you, and in the mean while I will take his capons into his cell." "But have you told him how much he is to pay me?" inquired the other. "Certainly," replied Dore, "I said five;" and turning again to the friar, he cried aloud, shaking his head at the poor fellow, as he spoke, "Yes, it is five, father,—even *five!*" "True, I hear you," returned the prior in a mournful tone, while the happy Dore left the place; and when he had cleared the gate, proceeded as fast as his legs could carry him towards his own house. So the

prior, when he had finished the lady's confession, turning to the rustic, beckoned him to approach, which the latter, eager to be paid, lost no time in doing. The friar supposing him bent upon confession, said, "Kneel, with humility and reverence, kneel down!" "Humility?" cried the astonished rustic; "what humility? Give me the money for your capons first, that are just gone into your cell: "did not your man tell you you were to pay me five? and you said, 'True; I hear:' and that is what we agreed for, good father." "Heaven help us!" cried the friar, "what is all this? The man with the capons told me thou wert his gossip, a foster-brother of his, and wert much in want of confession, which I promised thee, and will give. So down on thy knees: brother, what are thy sins?" "Do you think to make a fool of me, father? Do you think I did not hear when he said 'five,' as loud as he could?" "But do not I tell you," said the friar, getting into a passion, "that he meant five years? yes, five, you rascal, since you were last confessed." "No, no," said the unhappy rustic; "but if you will not pay me the money, at least let me have my capons back." "But I have not got them," said the friar; "I wish I had: how can I give you back what I have never taken?" "Ah! this is very fine," said the other, quite in a

passion; "the man bought them for you, and he carried them just now into your cell,—what say you to that?" "I say," returned the priest, "let us go and look for them; there will be one a-piece; but if they be in my cell, I will eat them both without sauce, and pay thee thy price into the bargain; nay, I will give thee ten livres. Here are the keys: come and search! Do you think the rogue got through the key-hole," he continued, addressing the wretched rustic, as he opened the door, "without me, and my lock and key? There now, look till you are tired; you see every place is open; and if you find them, call me a greater thief than the thief himself."

The countryman bustled, and searched, and swore, but all to no purpose; no capons were there. So he at last said to the friar, "But surely you will tell me who the man is who cheated me." "I know him not," answered the good father, "any more than I know you. I never saw either of you in my life before, and, in my opinion, you are a couple of arrant rogues." And with this compliment, the poor countryman was obliged to take his leave.

NOVELLA II.

Scacazzone returning one day from Rome, found himself, when within a short distance of Sienna, without cash enough to purchase a dinner. But resolving not to go without one if he could avoid it, he very quietly walked into the nearest inn, and appearing quite a stranger, he demanded a room in which to dine alone. He next ordered whatever he considered most likely to prove agreeable to himself, without in the least sparing his purse, as the good host believed, and eat and drank every thing of the best. When he had at length finished his wine, and refreshed himself with a short nap, for his journey, he rang the bell, and with a very unconcerned air, asked the waiter for his bill. This being handed to him, "Waiter, he cried, "can you tell me any thing relating to the laws of this place?" "Oh yes, signor,—I dare say;" for a waiter is never at a loss. "For instance," continued Scacazzone, "what does a man forfeit by killing another?" "His life, signor, certainly," said the waiter. "But, if he only wounds another badly, not mortally, what then?" "Then," returned the waiter, "as it may happen,

according to the nature of the provocation and the injury." "And lastly," continued the guest, "if you only deal a fellow a seund box upon the ear, what do you pay for that?" "For that," echoed the waiter, "it is here about ten livres, signor; no more." "Then send your master to me," cried Scacazzone, "be quick, be gone!" Upon the good host's appearance, his wily guest conducted himself in such a manner, uttering such accusations against extortion, such threats, and such vile aspersions upon his host's house, that on Scacazzone purposely bringing their heads pretty close in contact, the landlord, unable longer to bear his taunts, lent him rather a severe cuff. "I am truly obliged to you," cried the happy Scacazzone, taking him by the hand, "this is all I wanted with you; truly obliged to you, my good host, and will thank you for the change. Your bill here is eight livres, and the fine upon your assault is ten; however, if you will have the goodness to pay the difference to the waiter, as I find I shall reach the city very pleasantly before evening, it will be quite right."

NOVELLA III.

Another time, our identical friend Scacazzone happening to pass by the church of our Lady of the Well, went in to pay his devotions to the patron saint of thieves. There were only three blind men in the place, apparently employed in the same manner; but hearing some one stirring, they began to ask alms, which the said Scacazzone bestowed equally upon all three, in the following manner: "I have made a vow, brothers," he said, "to bestow a whole gold ducat in charity, and I cannot do better than give it, my poor fellows, to you. Here it is, take it;" while each of them stretched out their hands, and he gave it to none. He next said: "If you will follow my advice now, you will all go to the nearest tavern, after finishing prayer, and try to make yourselves merry for once in your lives." Delighted at these words, and each supposing the other in possession of the gold, they declared themselves ready to follow his advice, and hastened as fast as they could find their way to the hostelry of Marchino in Diacceto, their arch enemy following at a convenient distance to enjoy the result. Proceeding therefore boldly

into the house, the blind guests began to give themselves no slight airs, requiring to be served with every thing of the best; while Scacazzone took his station at the threshold." They were no sooner seated, than they began to discuss the dishes with very little ceremony, sending many of them away, and calling for better fare, as truly the good host appeared to have an idea of entertaining them somewhat scantily, according to the cut of their cloth; their arch impostor having given him a sort of hint not to exceed the bounds of prudence, in point of supply. But he was so uncommonly attentive and polite, and made them so many fine promises, on condition of their consenting to make his house the scene of entertainment on other occasions, and was besides so very moderate in his demands (for the poor fellows could not see what they had been eating, and began to suspect all was not as it should be) that they were compelled to make the best of their bargain. Still they were so little pleased, that they would make no rash promises to come again, and as they called for their bill, their ideas rambled to future scenes of festivity, at some of their more ancient haunts. "Give him the ducat, and let us go," said one, "with the change, to some better quarters." "No," said another, "do you give it him; I have not got

it;" and so answered the third. "But one of you must have it," exclaimed the first. "I tell you I heard him give it to you." "Nay, to you," retorted the others; "you were standing nearer to the gate." "Very true, sirs;" but you were nearer to him who gave it; and you have got it between you, and shall pay." "Villain," cried one of the others, "do you tax us with theft? Had he given it to us, do you think you would not have known which?" "I know you are two rogues," rejoined the last, "and want to divide the ducat between you; yes, you want to cheat a poor honest blind man. But do you suppose I will not have my share?" and raising his cudgel as he spoke, he dealt his blows soundly on all sides of him.

Feeling the weight of his hand, his blind brothers were not long in following his example, and all the three began to hazard in every direction most serious and ferocious blows. Their want of eyes rendered the encounter by no means less dangerous; and one of the two friends had already disabled his ally by fracturing his arm, and was engaged with his enemy alone. "One of the rogues has killed me, I fear," cried the wounded man, as he attempted to draw from the field, and fell upon the ground. "I only wish they would despatch each other," he con-

tinued, as he heard them fiercely cuffing and grappling with one another; "I wish they would, and I should find the ducat in the pocket of one of them."

The author of this wicked trick, in the mean while, was enjoying the engagement at the door; and beginning to think the affair somewhat too serious, the populace already collecting in the street, he stepped in, with the help of the host, and carried off the wounded blind from the scene of action. Then separating the others with difficulty, he began to make inquiries into the merits of the case, and concluded with observing, "I dare say the gentleman gave the money to none of you: so come, here are three farthings, and I will pay your bill for you; and so be reconciled."

Niccolo Machiavelli.

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI.*

THE name of the Florentine secretary, in his character of a statesman and historian, is too generally known to require further illustration in a work like the present. Distinguished for his political life and labours, the confidential minister and adviser of princes, and employed in many important embassies, it appears somewhat singular, that we should be enabled to rank him also in the list of Italian novelists. Such, however, seems to have been the universality of his genius, as to lead him to prosecute the most opposite pursuits with comparative ease and success. Thus, in addition to his eight books of Florentine history, from the year 1215 to 1492, his Life of Castruccio Castricani, his Treatises upon Livy, and his Principe, he produced several comedies and poems, most of which, if not very correct, are at least distinguished for their wit and spirit. His comedies are La Mandragola, and La Clitia: and others,

* Born at Florence about the year 1469; died in 1527. His novel of Belphagor was not published until 1549, twenty-two years after the author's death.

most probably, as well as more specimens of his novels, have existed, but never been handed down to us. His single novel of Belphagor is all, then, we have here to present to the lover of Italian fiction; though it is considered by native writers as ample evidence, from the elegant manner in which it is treated, of the author's happy genius for this species of composition. As he flourished during a great part of the age of the Medici, he may be considered, also, as belonging to the writers of that golden period, among whom he affords us this solitary specimen. It has thus been cited in the Testi di Lingua, where we find mention of what is esteemed the best edition, in 1550, generally called Edizione Testina. This edition is alluded to, as the most correct and genuine impression, by Poggiali, who collated it with that published in the large edition of all this author's works, that appeared in the year 1782, at Florence.

In regard to the whimsical subject of the story, the merit of invention would appear to belong neither to Machiavelli nor any of his contemporaries, though it was long disputed which was the first to avail himself of it. On this point, perhaps, we cannot do better than refer to the authority of Mr. Dunlop, whose observations will be found in

a subsequent page.* "The notion of this story," Mr. Dunlop further remarks, "is ingenious, and might have been made productive of entertainin incident, had Belphagor been led, by his connu connexion, from one crime to another. But Belphagor is only unfortunate, and in no respect guilty: nor did any thing occur, during his abode on earth, that testified the power of woman in leading us to final condemnation. The story of the peasant, and the possession of the princesses, bears no reference to the original idea with which the tale commences, and has no connexion with the object of the infernal deputy's terrestrial sojourn."†

On this we might remark, that part of the humour of the story seems to consist in Belphagor's earthly career being cut short before he had served the full term of his apprenticeship. But from the follies and extravagancies into which he had already plunged, we are authorised to believe, that even if he had been able longer to support the asperities of the lady's temper, he must, from the course he was pursuing, have been led from crime to crime, or at least from folly to folly, to such a degree, that he would infallibly have been condemned.

* Vide post, p. 234.

† History of Fiction, vol. ii. pp. 411, 414, 415.

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI.

BELPHAGOR.*

NOVELLA PIACEVOLISSIMA.

We read in the ancient archives of Florence the following account, as it was received from the lips of a very holy man, greatly respected by every one for the sanctity of his manners, at the period in which he lived. Happening once to be deeply absorbed in his prayers, such was their efficacy, that he saw an infinite number of condemned souls, belonging to those miserable mortals who had died in their sins, undergoing the punishment due to their offences in the regions below. He remarked that the greater part of them lamented nothing so bitterly as their

* This novel would appear to have been a favourite subject of imitation, no less with the Italians than with the writers of other countries. "It has suggested," observes Mr. Dunlop, "the plot of an old English comedy, called Grim, the Collier of Croydon, printed 1602; and also Belphegor, or the Marriage of the Devil, 1691." Among the novelists of Italy it is disputed property, having been treated by a variety of hands.

folly in having taken wives, attributing to them the whole of their misfortunes. Much surprised at this, Minos and Rhadamanthus, with the rest of the infernal judges, unwilling to credit all the abuse heaped upon the female sex, and wearied from day to day with its repetition, agreed to bring the matter before Pluto. It was then resolved, that the conclave of infernal princes should form a committee of inquiry, and should adopt such measures as might be deemed most advisable by the court, in order to discover the truth or falsehood of the calumnies which they heard. All being assembled in council, Pluto addressed them as follows: "Dearly beloved demons! though by celestial dispensation, and the irreversible decree of fate, this kingdom fell to my share, and I might strictly dispense with any kind of celestial or earthly responsibility; yet as it is more prudent and respectful to consult the laws, and to hear the opinion of others, I have resolved to be guided by your advice, particularly in a case that may chance to cast some imputation upon our government. For the souls of all men daily arriving in our kingdom, still continue to lay the whole blame upon their wives, and as this appears to us impossible, we must be careful how we decide in such a business, lest we, also, should come in for a share of their abuse, on account of our

too great severity; and yet judgment must be pronounced, lest we be taxed with negligence, and with indifference to the interests of justice. Now as the latter is the fault of a careless, and the former of an unjust judge, we, wishing to avoid the trouble and the blame that might attach to both, yet hardly seeing how to get clear of it, naturally enough apply to you for assistance, in order that you may look to it, and contrive in some way, that as we have hitherto reigned, without the slightest imputation upon our character, we may continue to do so for the future."

The affair appearing to be of the utmost importance to all the princes present, they first resolved that it was necessary to ascertain the truth, though they differed as to the best means of accomplishing this object. Some were of opinion that they ought to choose one, or more, from among themselves, who should be commissioned to pay a visit to the world, and in a human shape endeavour personally to ascertain how far such reports were grounded in truth. To many others it appeared that this might be done without so much trouble, merely by compelling some of the wretched souls to confess the truth by the application of a variety of tortures. But the majority being in favour of a journey to the world, they abided by the former proposal. No one, however, being ambitious

of undertaking such a task, it was resolved to leave the affair to chance. The lot fell upon the arch-devil Belphagor, who, previous to the fall, had enjoyed the rank of archangel in a higher world. Though he received his commission with a very ill grace, he, nevertheless, felt himself constrained by Pluto's imperial mandate, and prepared to execute whatever had been determined upon in council. At the same time he took an oath, to observe the tenor of his instructions, as they had been drawn up with all due solemnity and ceremony for the purpose of his mission. These were to the following effect: *Imprimis*, that he better to promote the object in view, he should be furnished with a hundred thousand gold ducats; secondly, that he should make use of the utmost expedition in getting into the world; thirdly, that after assuming the human form he should enter into the marriage state; and lastly, that he should live with his wife for the space of ten years. At the expiration of this period, he was to feign death, and return home, in order to acquaint his employers, by the fruits of experience, what really were the respective conveniences and inconveniences of matrimony. The conditions further ran, that during the said ten years he should be subject to all kinds of miseries and disasters, like the rest of mankind; such

as poverty, prisons, and diseases into which men are apt to fall; unless, indeed, he could contrive by his own skill and ingenuity to avoid them. Poor Belphagor having signed these conditions, and received the money, forthwith came into the world, and having set up his equipage, with a numerous train of servants, he made a very splendid entrance into Florence. He selected this city in preference to all others, as being most favourable for obtaining an usurious interest of his money; and having assumed the name of Roderigo, a native of Castile, he took a house in the suburbs of Ognissanti. And because he was unable to explain the instructions under which he acted, he gave out that he was a merchant, who having had poor prospects in Spain, had gone to Syria, and succeeded in acquiring his fortune at Aleppo; whence he had lastly set out for Italy, with the intention of marrying and settling there, as one of the most polished and agreeable countries he knew.

Roderigo was certainly a very handsome man, apparently about thirty years of age, and he lived in a style of life that shewed he was in pretty easy circumstances, if not possessed of immense wealth. Being moreover extremely affable and liberal, he soon attracted the notice of many noble citizens, blest with large families of daughters, and small incomes.

The former of these were soon offered to him, from among whom Roderigo chose a very beautiful girl of the name of Onesta, a daughter of Amerigo Donati, who had also three sons, all grown up, and three more daughters, also nearly marriageable. Though of a noble family, and enjoying a good reputation in Florence, his father-in-law was extremely poor, and maintained as poor an establishment. Roderigo, therefore, made very splendid nuptials, and omitted nothing that might tend to confer honour upon such a festival; being liable, under the law which he received on leaving his infernal abode, to feel all kinds of vain and earthly passions. He therefore soon began to enter into all the pomps and vanities of the world, and to aim at reputation and consideration among mankind; which put him to no little expense. But more than this, he had not long enjoyed the society of his beloved Onesta, before he became tenderly attached to her, and was unable to behold her suffer the slightest inquietude or vexation. Now, along with her other gifts of beauty and nobility, the lady had brought into the house of Roderigo such an insufferable portion of pride, that in this respect Lucifer himself could not equal her; for her husband, who had experienced the effects of both, was at no loss to decide which was the most intolerable of the two. Yet

MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASW

it became infinitely worse, when she discovered the extent of Roderigo's attachment to her, of which she availed herself to obtain an ascendancy over him, and rule him with a rod of iron. Not content with this, when she found he would bear it, she continued to annoy him with all kinds of insults and taunts, in such a way as to give him the most indescribable pain and uneasiness. For, what with the influence of her father, her brothers, her friends, and relatives, the duty of the matrimonial yoke, and the love he bore her, he suffered all, for some time, with the patience of a saint. It would be useless to recount the follies and extravagancies into which he ran, in order to gratify her taste for dress, and every article of the newest fashion, in which our city, ever so variable in its nature, according to its usual habits, so much abounds. Yet to live upon easy terms with her, he was obliged to do more than this; he had to assist his father-in-law in portioning off his other daughters; and she next asked him to furnish one of her brothers with goods to sail for the Levant, another with silks for the west, while a third was to be set up in a gold-beater's establishment at Florence. In such objects the greatest part of his fortune was soon consumed. At length the Carnival season was at hand; the festival of St. John was to be celebrated, and the

whole city, as usual, was in a ferment. Numbers of the noblest families were about to vie with each other in the splendour of their parties; and the lady Onesta, being resolved not to be outshone by her acquaintance, insisted that Roderigo should exceed them all in the richness of their feasts. For the reasons above stated, he submitted to her will; nor, indeed, would he have scrupled at doing much more, however difficult it might have been, could he have flattered himself with a hope of preserving the peace and comfort of his household, and of awaiting quietly the consummation of his ruin. But this was not the case, inasmuch as the arrogant temper of his wife had grown to such a height of asperity by long indulgence, that he was at a loss in what way to act. His domestics, male and female, would no longer remain in the house, being unable to support, for any length of time, the intolerable life they led. The inconvenience which he suffered in consequence of having no one to whom he could entrust his affairs, it is impossible to express. Even his own familiar devils, whom he had brought along with him, had already deserted him, choosing to return below, rather than longer submit to the tyranny of his wife. Left then to himself, amidst this turbulent and unhappy life, and having dissipated all the ready money he possessed, he was

compelled to live upon the hopes of the returns expected from his ventures in the east and the west. Being still in good credit, in order to support his rank, he resorted to bills of exchange; nor was it long before, accounts running against him, he found himself in the same situation as many other unhappy speculators in that market. Just as his case became extremely delicate, there arrived sudden tidings both from east and west, that one of his wife's brothers had dissipated the whole of Roderigo's profits in play, and that while the other was returning with a rich cargo, uninsured, his ship had the misfortune to be wrecked, and he himself was lost. No sooner did this affair transpire, than his creditors assembled; and supposing it must be all over with him, though their bills had not yet become due, they resolved to keep a strict watch over him in fear that he might abscond. Roderigo, on his part, thinking that there was no other remedy, and feeling how deeply he was bound by the Stygian law, determined at all hazards to make his escape. So taking horse one morning early, as he luckily lived near the Prato gate, in that direction he went off. His departure was soon known; the creditors were all in a bustle; the magistrates were applied to; and the officers of justice, along with a great part of the populace, were despatched

in pursuit. Roderigo had hardly proceeded a mile before he heard this hue and cry, and the pursuers were soon so close at his heels that the only resource he had left, was to abandon the high road, and take to the open country, with the hope of concealing himself in the fields. But finding himself unable to make way over the hedges and ditches, he left his horse, and took to his heels, traversing fields of vines and canes until he reached Peretola, where he entered the house of Matteo del Bricca, a labourer of Giovanni del Bene. Finding him at home, for he was busily providing fodder for his cattle, our hero earnestly entreated him to save him from the hands of his adversaries, close behind, who would infallibly starve him to death in a dungeon; engaging that if Matteo would give him refuge, he would make him one of the richest men alive, and afford him such proofs of it before he took his leave, as would convince him of the truth of what he said. And if he failed to do this, he was quite content that Matteo himself should deliver him into the hands of his enemies.

Now, Matteo, although a rustic, was a man of courage, and concluding that he could not lose any thing by the speculation, he gave him his hand, and agreed to save him. He then thrust our hero under

a heap of rubbish, completely enveloping him in weeds; so that when his pursuers arrived, they found themselves quite at a loss; nor could they extract from Matteo the least information as to his appearance. In this dilemma there was nothing left for them but to proceed in the pursuit, which they continued for two days, and then returned, jaded and disappointed, to Florence. In the mean while, Matteo drew our hero from his hiding place, and begged him to fulfil his engagement. To this his friend Roderigo replied: "I confess, brother, that I am under great obligations to you, and I mean to return them. To leave no doubt upon your mind, I will inform you who I am;" and he proceeded to acquaint him with all the particulars of the affair: how he had come into the world, and married, and run away. He next described to his preserver the way in which he might become rich, which was briefly as follows. As soon as Matteo should hear of some lady in the neighbourhood being said to be possessed, he was to conclude that it was Roderigo himself who had taken possession of her; and he gave him his word, at the same time, that he would never leave her, until Matteo should come, and conjure him to depart. In this way he might obtain what sum he pleased from the lady's friends for the price

of exorcising her; and having mutually agreed upon this plan, Roderigo disappeared.

Not many days elapsed before it was reported in Florence, that the daughter of Messer Ambrogio Amedei, a lady married to Buonajuto Tebalducci, was possessed by the devil. Her relations did not fail to apply every means usual on such occasions, to expel him, such as making her wear upon her head Saint Zanobi's cap, and the cloak of Saint John of Gualberto; but these had only the effect of making Roderigo laugh. And to convince them that it was really a spirit that possessed her, and that it was no flight of the imagination, he made the young lady talk latin, hold a philosophical dispute, and reveal the frailties of many of her acquaintance. He particularly accused a certain friar of having introduced a lady into his monastery in male attire, to the no small scandal of all who heard it, and the astonishment of the brotherhood. Messer Ambrogio found it impossible to silence him, and began to despair of his daughter's cure. But the news reaching Matteo, he lost no time in waiting upon Ambrogio, assuring him of his daughter's recovery, on condition of his paying him five hundred florins, with which to purchase a farm at Peretola. To this Messer Ambrogio consented; and Matteo immediately ordered a number of masses to be

said; after which he proceeded with some unmeaning ceremonies calculated to give solemnity to his task. Then approaching the young lady, he whispered in her ear: "Roderigo, it is Matteo that is come. So do as we agreed upon, and get out." Roderigo replied: "It is all well; but you have not asked enough to make you a rich man. So when I depart I will take possession of the daughter of Charles, king of Naples, and I will not leave her till you come. You may then demand whatever you please for your reward; and mind that you never trouble me again." And when he had said this, he went out of the lady, to the no small delight and amazement of the whole city of Florence.

It was not long again, before the accident that had happened to the daughter of the king of Naples, began to be buzzed about the country, and all the monkish remedies having been found to fail, the king hearing of Matteo, sent for him from Florence. On arriving at Naples, Matteo, after a few ceremonies, performed the cure. Before leaving the princess, however, Roderigo said: "You see, Matteo, I have kept my promise, and made a rich man of you; and I owe you nothing now. So henceforward, you will take care to keep out of my way, lest as I have hitherto done you some good, just the contrary should happen to you

in future." Upon this Matteo thought it best to return to Florence, after receiving fifty thousand ducats from his majesty, in order to enjoy his riches in peace; and never once imagined that Roderigo would come in his way again. But in this he was deceived; for he soon heard that a daughter of Lewis, king of France, was possessed by an evil spirit, which disturbed our friend Matteo not a little: thinking of his majesty's great authority, and of what Roderigo had said. Hearing of Matteo's great skill, and finding no other remedy, the king despatched a messenger for him, whom Matteo contrived to send back with a variety of excuses. But this did not long avail him; the king applied to the Florentine council, and our hero was compelled to attend. Arriving with no very pleasant sensations at Paris, he was introduced into the royal presence, when he assured his majesty that though it was true he had acquired some fame in the course of his demoniac practice, he could by no means always boast of success: and that some devils were of such a desperate character, as not to pay the least attention to threats, enchantments, or even the exorcisms of religion itself. He would nevertheless do his majesty's pleasure, entreating at the same time to be held excused, if it should happen to prove an obstinate case. To this the king

made answer, that be the case what it might, he would certainly hang him if he did not succeed. It is impossible to describe poor Matteo's terror and perplexity on hearing these words; but at length mustering courage, he ordered the possessed princess to be brought into his presence. Approaching as usual close to her ear, he conjured Roderigo in the most humble terms, by all he had ever done for him, not to abandon him in such a dilemma; but to show some sense of gratitude for past services, and to leave the princess. "Ah! thou traitorous villain!" cried Roderigo, "hast thou, indeed, ventured to meddle in this business? Dost thou boast thyself a rich man at my expense? I will now convince the world and thee of the extent of my power, both to give and to take away. I shall have the pleasure of seeing thee hanged before thou leavest this place." Poor Matteo finding there was no remedy, said nothing more; but like a wise man, set his head to work, in order to discover some other means of expelling the spirit; for which purpose he said to the king: "Sire, it is as I feared: there are certain spirits of so malignant a character, that there is no keeping any terms with them, and this is one of them. However, I will make a last attempt, and I trust that it will succeed according to

our wishes. If not, I am in your majesty's power, and I hope you will take compassion on my innocence.

In the first place, I have to entreat that your majesty will order a large stage to be erected in the centre of the great square, such as will admit the nobility and clergy of the whole city. The stage ought to be adorned with all kinds of silks, and with cloth of gold, and with an altar raised in the middle. To-morrow morning I would have your majesty, with your full train of lords and ecclesiastics in attendance, seated in order, and in magnificent array, as spectators of the scene, at the said place. There, after having celebrated solemn mass, the possessed princess must appear: but I have in particular to entreat, that on one side of the square may be stationed a band of men with drums, trumpets, horns, tambours, bagpipes, cymbals, and kettle-drums, and all other kinds of instruments that make the most infernal noise. Now, when I take my hat off, let the whole band strike up, and approach with the most horrid uproar towards the stage. This, along with a few other secret remedies which I shall apply, will surely compel the spirit to depart."

These preparations were accordingly made by the royal command; and when the day, being Sunday morning, arrived, the stage was seen crowded with

people of rank, and the square with the people. Mass was celebrated, and the possessed princess conducted between two bishops, with a train of nobles, to the spot. Now when Roderigo beheld so vast a concourse of people, together with all this awful preparation, e was almost struck dumb with astonishment, and said to himself: "I wonder what that cowardly wretch is thinking of doing now? Does he imagine I have never seen finer things than these in the regions above? Aye; and more horrid things below. However, I will soon make him repent it at all events." Matteo then approaching him, besought him to come out; but Roderigo replied: "Oh, you think you have done a fine thing now! What do you mean to do with all this trumpery? Can you escape my power, think you, in this way, or elude the vengeance of the king? Thou poltroon villain, I will have thee hanged for this!" And as Matteo continued the more to entreat him, his adversary still vilified him in the same strain. So Matteo believing there was no time to be lost, made the sign with his hat, when all the musicians who had been stationed there for the purpose, suddenly struck up a hideous din, and ringing a thousand peals, approached the spot. Roderigo pricked up his ears at the sound, quite at a loss what to think, and rather in a per-

turbed tone of voice, he asked Matteo what it meant. To this the latter returned, apparently much alarmed: "Alas, dear Roderigo, it is your wife; she is coming for you!" It is impossible to give an idea of the anguish of Roderigo's mind, and the strange alteration which his feelings underwent at that name. The moment the name of "wife" was pronounced, he had no longer presence of mind to consider whether it were probable, or even possible, that it could be her. Without replying a single word, he leaped out and fled in the utmost terror, leaving the lady to herself, and preferring rather to return to his infernal abode, and render an account of his adventures, than run the risk of any further sufferings and vexations under the matrimonial yoke. And thus Belphagor again made his appearance in the infernal domains, bearing ample testimony to the evils introduced into a household by a wife; while Matteo, on his part, who knew more of the matter than the devil, returned triumphantly home, not a little proud of the victory he had achieved.

Novels of Agnolo Firenzuola.

AGNOLO FIRENZUOLA.

The name of this author is better known, and far more celebrated throughout Italy, than that of most of his contemporaries, who particularly devoted themselves to one branch of composition. For he is no less distinguished in his character of a novelist than as a critic and a poet; and he is entitled to rank amongst the first classical scholars. His talents have been highly commended by Tiraboschi, Crescimbeni, and indeed all the critical historians, from the period in which he flourished; while his life was twice written, once by Father Mieron, and again, in a much superior manner, by the learned Manni. He was born at Florence, on the 28th of September, 1493, and pursued his studies in the cities of Perugia and Sienna; where his acquaintance, however, with the Aretini was neither favourable to the proper direction of his genius, nor to the correctness of his manners. In their letters we are presented with a lively and amusing, though by no means always an edifying account, of the manner in which they passed their time: their satirical and

burlesque attacks upon each other, and humorous pieces of poetry, with abundant ridicule heaped upon their adversaries, happily contrasted with their mutual praises and exquisite conceit of themselves. Firenzuola is nevertheless said, with such qualifications, to have assumed the ecclesiastical habit, and to have become, according to Tiraboschi, *Monaco Vallombrosano,* belonging to the monastery of Santa Maria di Spoleti, in which order he attained to very considerable honours. After suffering from long illness, of which he complains bitterly in one of his letters to his friend Aretino, he died about the age of fifty, towards the middle of the sixteenth century. The entire edition of his works appeared at Florence, in 1763, containing his prose productions, novels, strictures upon the letters of Trissino, treatises upon animals, two comedies, a translation of Apuleius's Golden Ass, applied to the circumstances of his own times, with a variety of other matter. These are distinguished as much for the ease and polish of their style, as for the liveliness and diversity of their subjects, a circumstance that contributed not a little to their celebrity.

AGNOLO FIRENZUOLA.

NOVELLA I.

In ancient days, it is said, there flourished in Tuscany two noble citizens, both extremely wealthy. and both descended from good families. Not satisfied, however, like too many, with the reputation acquired by their ancestors, nor esteeming the works of others as any kind of ornament to themselves, they vied with each other in conferring distinction upon their nobility by their actions, rather than in assuming it from the dignity of their birth. Thus, in their correspondence, their manners, and the whole tenor of their life and transactions, they procured for themselves a high reputation throughout Florence, which was not a little enhanced by the mutual esteem, and more than fraternal kindness that was invariably observed to exist between them. They were generally seen in company together, their pursuits were nearly congenial, and their days appeared to flow, at once in so noble and so pure a stream, that fortune herself seemed to respect their virtues and their happiness.

Her smiles, however, as of old, were delusive; for Niccolo degli Albizi, one of these two friends, hearing of the decease of an uncle, his mother's brother, who died extremely rich in Valencia, leaving Niccolo, in default of children, his sole heir, was under the necessity of making a voyage into Spain. Mentioning his intention to his friend Coppo, the latter directly proposed, as he expected, to accompany him. Having made their arrangements, therefore, they were just upon the point of departure, when, unfortunately, Coppo's father was seized with a mortal distemper, which terminated his existence in a few days; a circumstance that left Niccolo no alternative but that of giving up his voyage, or proceeding alone.

Adopting the latter resolution, after taking a sorrowful and affectionate leave, he bent his course towards Genoa, and there took his passage in a Genoese vessel, upon the point of sailing for a Spanish port. It was now that his fortune first began to wear a different aspect; for the ship had hardly made fifty leagues from shore, when about sunset the sea was observed to become white and foamy, presenting at the same time various other signs of an approaching tempest. And before the master of the vessel had completed his orders, she was enveloped in a torrent of rain, while the fierce hurricane ren-

dered her unmanageable, bearing her onwards in a shroud of mist and darkness, that defied the eye of the oldest navigator. This soon became, if possible, more horridly appalling by contrast with the lurid flashes of lightning that broke athwart the gloom, consigning them again to utter darkness. Images of the most terrific nature haunted the fancy of the crew, thus suddenly deprived of all external objects; and it was piteous to think of the efforts of those who retained heart enough to struggle with the adverse elements, while they often adopted, in hope of rescue measures that tended, perhaps, only to ac- [illegible] n destruction. Even the stentorian voice of the master could no longer be heard through the storm, while the straining and rending of the masts and sails, intermingled with occasional cries, and the deep volleys of thunder rolling in the distance, formed altogether an union of appalling sounds that struck terror to the boldest spirit.

The danger still increased, and their remaining courage, dying away in their last feeble efforts, soon wholly forsook them; for they were now borne mountains high, now plunged, as it were, into the abysses of the deep, from which the ship would again emerge to the surprise of all, like a sea bird from the hollow caverns of the deep. So terrific indeed, before she

yielded, did the scene appear, that the hair of the boldest sailor stood on end, as he felt, rather than saw, the furious commingling, the utter confusion, and the wild reverberation, of heaven, air, and sea. Alas! how hastily did the most niggardly and grasping hands consign their treasure, their richest silks and stuffs, to the remorseless deep, with all the precious metals that were first thrown overboard; though, when lightened of her load, she only seemed to drive more madly before the winds. The affrighted passengers, who had before sought to shun the sight of their approaching doom below, at length rushed tumultuously upon deck. "The cabin is filling w[illegible] the cry, while every sailor, who before had stood to his post, then fell on his knees, and embracing his nearest friend, and joining in the general cry of *Misericordia!* appeared to consign himself to his doom. How many who wanted comfort themselves, generously tried in that bitter moment to support others, yet weaker and more appalled! How many who had seldom or never prayed, were heard muttering faint and incoherent appeals to heaven! Some called upon the blessed Virgin, some upon San Niccolo di Bari, while others trusted to San Ermo; and pilgrimages to the Holy Sepulchre, and religious vows, were abundantly poured forth, in the hope

of being miraculously rescued, like Jonas, from the bowels of the deep. The libertine was even heard to make a vow of marriage; dealers and usurers swore to make restitution; while such few as loved the world less, uttered the most tender expressions to their absent fathers, mothers, children, and friends, at the same time mingling their pity for each other. While thus employed, the main mast, with a terrific crash, went into the sea, which was the signal for the vessel's parting, hardly affording time for a few of the most bold and active to seize the scattered pieces of the wreck. Niccolo, however, being among these last, supported himself with the aid of a small table, nor ever yielded his hold until he found himself thrown upon the coast of Barbary, a short way from Susa. Being there perceived by a party of fishermen, they took compassion upon him, and conducted him to a small hut belonging to them, where they restored him to animation over a large fire. Upon finding that he spoke in the Latin tongue, the fishermen, supposing him to be an infidel, and that they were not likely to catch any more valuable fish that morning, agreed to carry him instantly for sale to Tunis. There they sold him to a wealthy merchant of the name of Lagi Amet, who, liking his youthful and gentlemanlike appearance, resolved to retain him about his own per-

son. In this service the captive displayed so much discretion and fidelity, as to merit the regard of the whole household, but most unfortunately for his master, of one in particular; the lovely wife of Amet having been unable to behold the pleasing and handsome stranger with indifference. Possessed of the greatest beauty and accomplishments, she remarked the superiority of his manners and appearance to every other person around her; and at first taking an innocent delight in hearing the narration of his life and travels, she soon began to feel uneasy when out of his company. She would sit and hear him converse, and gaze upon him for hours, and yet so open and undisguised was her admiration, that Lagi Amet, entertaining no idea of the possibility of danger, made his beautiful lady a present of the amusing slave upon whom she bestowed so much attention. Overpowered with agitation and delight, she attempted to conceal the pleasure which such an offer gave her, and for some time succeeded in it; though she now began to be aware, when too late, of the real nature of her feelings. In spite of her caution, she was often on the point of betraying them to the object of her regard, but the idea of the confidence reposed in her by Amet, and of bestowing her affections upon a slave, deprived her of the power of utterance. Be-

sides the difficulties she would have to encounter, her life, her honour, every thing which she valued, would be at stake; and frequent and long were the struggles she made against the growing passion that consumed her. "Wretched creature that I am!" she would exclaim, "to be so deeply sensible of those superior merits and accomplishments that I must not love, nor hardly admire, and yet all these affections are bestowed upon a slave, an outcast, and a Christian; one who, upon the first glimpse of liberty, would leave thee to weep over thine own weakness in sorrow and despair. And how could he love me, indeed? Could a slave love me as he loves his own liberty? Oh, abandon the very thought; it is alike treason against my honour and my life! If I sacrifice myself, let it at least be for some nobler object; let it not be said that the wife of Amet died for a slave! But, alas! why did I not feel and act in this way before; before I became thus tortured, lost, abandoned to passion and despair! Besides, am I not wed? am I not already the property of another? Yes, it is madness to pursue the path I am in, and still I feel, I know, I have not strength to abandon it. If I yield not; if I tell him not all my love and sufferings to-day; should I continue still to see and to listen to him, I only prolong the period of my ruin until to-morrow.

Let me hasten then, and acquaint him while there is yet time; for though a foreigner and a slave, he has a noble spirit, and it is fortune only that is to blame. She cannot rob him of those sweet and courteous manners, of that true nobility of soul that shines in every tone and look, and of all those virtues which seem to surround him with a radiant light that attracts my very soul, and which I feel sure he must possess beyond all the men I have ever seen. Can fortune deprive him of these, and of his noble birth? No, to be unfortunate is the common lot of all; and even were I the next moment to become a slave, should I not still be the same I now am? His ill fortune, therefore, ought not to make me love him the less; and who can say I may not be the happy means of bringing him over to the true faith, while at the same time he will on that account become more passionately attached to me? And why should a weak and wretched creature like myself, attempt to master a feeling that has enslaved thousands of the wisest men upon earth? I must at least just see and speak to him, though I refrain from giving him the most distant idea of my love!"

With these weak and dangerous sentiments, the unhappy lady, half reconciled to her fate, sought the presence of her handsome slave; nor was it long

before this was followed by an explanation, that, almost inarticulate between tears and blushes, invested Niccolo rather with the character of her lord than of her slave. Still, he was long in doubt, whether he ought to credit the words he heard; whether it were reality, or a dream; a snare laid for his honour, or the proudest tribute that could be rendered to his worth. At first then, he was about to check the torrent of her feelings, expressing equal surprise and alarm at what he heard; but when he next reflected upon the many gentle tokens of her kindness and attention to him, and upon her superior sense and accomplishments beyond all the women he had ever seen; bethinking himself at the same time, of the story of the Conte d'Anversa and the Queen of France, besides many others; he began to consider the whole as nothing less than actual truth.

Warmly expressing his deep gratitude for the distinction conferred upon him, and far from being insensible to her transcendent beauty and accomplishments, the enslaved Niccolo bent himself lowly at his fair mistress's feet. Yet possessing high and honourable principles, he resolved to make her his upon no other condition than consenting to be baptized in the name of Jesus of Nazareth. The lady, who had every inclination to become a believer on

these terms, finding that she had no chance of adding him to the disciples of Mahomet, readily gave her consent, sealing it at the same time with a thousand Saracenic oaths: upon which Niccolo thought it incumbent upon him to explain a little more clearly the nature of the Christian religion, and what it imposed upon her. Thinking the conditions at first a little hard, she made some slight demur; proposing that they should rather both embrace the doctrines of Mahomet, which were certainly more easy, and much more likely to be fulfilled. Niccolo, however, assured her, that as a Christian she was bound to observe as many duties as possible, and to pray for grace to perform such as she felt an inclination to omit; that she must never be weary of her task; that she must be found always watching, and not like the foolish virgins, who forgot to trim their lamps, and whose lights went out. On hearing him utter these words, she would certainly have pronounced him mad, had she not already been too deeply in love. As it was, she contented herself with saying, after revolving a variety of confused ideas in her mind: "Come, you shall make me what you please:" and accordingly she was the same day baptized, christened, confessed, received the communion, and married to Niccolo according to the rites of

the holy church. And so sweet in a short time did its new mysteries and duties appear to her, that being naturally possessed of superior intellect and endowments, she no longer regretted the faith of her ancestors, and began to take delight in nothing so much as having the Christian doctrines expounded to her by the voice of Niccolo.

While she thus continued making daily progress, under the judicious instructions of Niccolo, in a subject so important to her best interests, Niccolo's friend Coppo, in the mean while, had not been idle, inquiring in all directions, wherever he conceived it probable that he might have been wrecked or captured. Not content with this, he himself set out in quest of him, and arrived at Tunis just as Niccolo happened to be passing with the lady close by the place where he was seen dismounting, so that they met and recognized each other in the streets. Niccolo testified his gratitude to Coppo for so striking a proof of his fidelity, but at the same time requested him not to execute his intention of procuring his ransom, until he should hear further from him; and then giving him his address, and shaking him cordially by the hand, he accompanied his lady home. A little surprised at this occurrence, the lady inquired, with a smile, who he was, and what business he could

have with her slave, being particularly jealous of every thing that might interfere with her own views; questions which her Christian husband answered with his usual eloquence, to her entire satisfaction. Yet, as we may easily believe, Niccolo was still anxious to return to his native land; but he was aware, that if the enamoured lady discovered his design, she would effect his utter destruction, or at least would counteract his plans. He was therefore uncertain how to act; and for this reason he had exhorted Coppo to secrecy, as to the object of his arrival. Besides, he would have preferred, rather than basely desert her, to remain in the pleasing slavery to which his adored lady had consigned him. Fly, however, somewhere, they shortly must; as she had now become so extravagantly attached to him, that he was fearful of the affair reaching the ears of Lagi Amet. With this view, he now determined to persuade her to accompany him, insisting that it was one of the duties of a Christian wife to share her husband's fortunes, and follow him wherever he went. He therefore considered the arrival of Coppo as a very fortunate circumstance, and after consulting with him, and reflecting upon the best method that could be adopted, they determined to carry her along with them. So

Niccolo represented to his wife that there was no time to be lost, if they wished to avoid the fate of so many unfortunate lovers, who had fallen victims to the bow-string or the sack; and to this judicious opinion the lady, without any sort of hesitation, subscribed. "Yes," she added, "I will see your beautiful Italy; there is no question of it at all; whatever sacrifices I make, whatever pleasures and honours I relinquish, they are for your sake, and I shall not regret them. And yet I tremble when I think upon the dreadful risks I am about to encounter, even if I escape alive out of the hands of the savage infidel who called me his consort, whom it would perhaps be the wisest way to strangle before we go." Here Niccolo, grieved that she should have made so little progress in the duty of Christian charity, reminded her that she must no longer consider these things in the light she had been used to, adding, that he felt inclined rather to pity the fate of Amet, in being deprived of so much beauty and perfection, were it not that it was his paramount duty to convert infidels to the true faith. Then, advising her to collect the whole of her treasures, but to respect the property of Amet, he hastened to fix the time and method of his departure with his friend Coppo.

All at length being in readiness, they planned a

little pleasure party, feigning it was entirely for the amusement of Amet, to which the foolish infidel, not a little proud of so delicate a compliment, gladly consented. Having conveyed every thing on board a fast-sailing little pinnace, they said that they would just pay a visit to one of the Dey's large ships before they called for their master; and, hoisting all sail, they very wisely left the old merchant behind them. They had proceeded about half a league from shore, when some of Lagi Amet's servants, observing them pass the vessel at full sail, and boldly hold on their course, raised a hue and cry that very quickly reached the ears of their master. Tearing his hair, at least what little was left of it, the credulous old infidel, in a fit of rage and despair, despatched boats in pursuit, without number, employing himself in the mean time with trying different bow-strings, and other refined instruments of torture, to welcome their return. And unluckily, as it happened, though they escaped pursuit, and set foot in safety on the Sicilian shore, they took up their quarters at an hotel in Messina, where the following unpleasant circumstances occurred. For the ambassador of the king of Tunis, having that very day arrived at the same place, to transact affairs of great importance at the court of Sicily, occupied apartments in the same

house; and, casting his eyes upon the disordered dress and dark complexion of the lady, he thought that he recognized in the fugitive, one whom he had often seen at Tunis. At the same moment arrived letters, advertising him of the lady's flight, and imposing upon him the duty of securing her person, with the leave of his Sicilian majesty, with whom he was to use his utmost influence to have her sent back to her own husband. So, immediately requesting an audience, the ambassador expounded his master's wishes on the subject; and the king having verified the fact, expressed the greatest readiness to remand the fugitives, since it would afford pleasure to his ally, from whom, at that time, he was desirous of obtaining some essential favours. What were the feelings, then, of the unhappy party, who imagining that they had secured their escape, found they had rushed upon their own destruction, and were to be consigned into the hands of an offended and relentless enemy! The heart of Coppo was torn with distraction for his friend, while the lovers uttered the most piteous cries and prayers, pleading also, that they were united in faith and in marriage, both deserving of freedom, and both christians. All, however, was of no avail, for the king, anxious to conciliate the Dey, commanded them to be re-imbarked

forthwith in the same vessel, under the care of one of his own captains, who had orders to land them in Barbary, and deposit them safely, with the king's compliments, in the hands of their lawful sovereign. And already were they proceeding upon their wretched voyage, with calm and favourable breezes, from which they turned in anguish to the shores that were receding from their view; when fortune, as if weary at length of her continued persecutions, again raised a furious tempest before the vessel had time to make the port, and drove her back until she reached the Tyrrhene sea, near Leghorn, where, broken and dismantled, she became the easy prey of some Pisan corsairs. But noble ransom being offered them by the unfortunate captives, they were shortly afterwards put on shore, and at length arrived in safety, with some portion of their remaining treasures, at the city of Pisa. There, owing to the infinite dangers and sufferings to which she had been subjected, the hapless lady was seized with a fever that had nearly proved mortal, and it was the incessant care and affection of Niccolo alone that succeeded in restoring her. Upon her recovery, they bent their way towards Florence, where, on their arrival, they were received with the utmost surprise and the warmest congratulations by all their friends; while feasts and re-

velry on all sides, testified the joy that was felt for their return. When the health of his beloved proselyte and benefactress was a little recruited, Niccolo kindly proposed, for their more complete satisfaction, that his beloved wife should be again baptised in the church of San Giovanni; and being christened by the name of Beatrice, she was once more solemnly espoused by him, with the utmost splendour and magnificence, according to the minutest rites and ceremonies of the holy church. At the same time, in order to bind their interests in a still nearer union, Niccolo bestowed upon his friend Coppo the hand of his sister, who, in addition to the charms of beauty, boasted likewise all the virtues of her brother. Beatrice, delighted with every thing she saw and heard, even beyond the picture held out to her by the happy Niccolò, soon made such rapid progress in every desirable virtue and accomplishment, as to astonish the Florentine ladies by the richness and vivacity of her ideas, and the charms of her manners and conversation. In a short time, also, she became so fondly attached to her new sister-in-law, as to render it difficult to decide whether their friendship or that of their husbands was the most rare and exemplary. Certain it is, that the two happy pairs passed their days in such entire amity and peace, that there never

occurred the slightest cause of dissatisfaction or division, an instance of domestic happiness highly deserving of commemoration, and which attracted universal admiration and applause. Indeed, so far from becoming disagreeable to, or weary of each other, they appeared daily to take more pleasure in one another's company, and more intent upon amusing, gratifying, and instructing themselves and their friends around them, in such a manner, that, becoming extremely popular with all parties, they exercised the most happy and beneficial influence over the manners and feelings of the people of Florence.

NOVELLA X.

It was a privilege enjoyed by the relater of the tenth, or last story of the day, in Boccaccio's Decameron, occasionally to leave the beaten track, and enter upon any fresh subject which might be thought most agreeable; an example, which in the present instance, as I am the last in the series, I intend to follow. Proclaiming a truce, therefore, to our love adventures, which have occupied us nearly the whole of the day, I wish to amuse you with some account of a certain friar of Novara, who flourished about twenty years ago. You hardly need to be told, that, among all ranks and conditions of men, the good people to be met with are more rare than those of an opposite description; so that I trust you will not be very greatly surprised to hear, that in the holy brotherhood there are not a few who fall short of perfection, and even of what the rules of their order require. Nor ought we to think it strange that the vice of avarice, which bears such sway in the courts of princes, both spiritual and temporal, should sometimes take up her residence in the cloisters of the poor brothers.

It happened that in the town of Novara, a very

pretty city of Lombardy, there dwelt a rich widow lady, whose name was Donna Agnes. She had worn her weeds with persevering sorrow ever since the death of her dear Gaudenzio de' Piotti, who, besides her dowry, which was very handsome for a lady in those parts, had left her other possessions that put her very much at her ease, even though she should prefer worshipping his memory to any new connexion. She had borne him moreover four boys, whose education would now devolve upon her alone. But this excellent and considerate husband was scarcely laid at rest in the ground, before tidings of this his last will and testament reached the ears of the superior of the convent of San Nazaro, situated a little way beyond the gate of San Agabio. This same good monk was commissioned by the society to keep an eye upon testamentary donations; so that no widow should pass him by without affording at least her mite, and assuming the girdle of the seraphic St. Francis. Having been once admitted as lay sisters into their order, many of these devotees were in the habit of frequenting their congregation, and offering up prayers for the souls of their deceased friends, expressing their gratitude to the poor brethren in the shape of fine Bologna sausages and pasties, and were occasionally induced, in their zeal for

imitating the good works of the blessed Fra Ginepro, and other renowned saints, to endow some little chapel for the convenience of the order, where they might represent the glorious history of St. Francis, as he was seen preaching to the birds in the desert, engaged in kneading the holy bread, or at the moment when the angel Gabriel brought him his saintly slippers. The chapel once built, it was not very difficult to raise sufficient, from the same quarter, to defray an annual festival in honour of the saint's holy stripes, and to celebrate every Monday a mass for the souls of all his followers who might still happen to be suffering the pains of purgatory. But as, consistent with their profession of poverty, the good brethren could not openly avail themselves of these gifts, they adopted the ingenious method of endowing their holy buildings, and holding the property as appurtenant to the sacristies, imagining they could thus as easily impose upon heaven, as upon us poor credulous mortals here below. As if their real motives, and all the envy, pride, and covetousness, concealed under the large cowls of pursy monks, were not fully as evident to an all-seeing eye, as those vices that are more clearly apparent in the broad light of the day. These are they, who instead of begging their bread barefoot, or preaching to the

people, as they ought to do, wherever they appear, prefer sitting at ease in their well stored monasteries; supplied with delicate changes of shoes and linen, some five pair of Cordova slippers, silk stockings, and sweet, dainty fare. And when they can muster sufficient exertion, or it is quite necessary for them to go abroad, they mount their mules, as elegantly attired as themselves, or pretty palfreys, whose paces are of the easiest, so as never to produce a feeling of fatigue. They are equally cautious not to burden the mind with too much study, finding the truth of the scripture observation, that it is indeed "a weariness to the flesh;" besides the holy dread they entertain, as in the case of Lucifer, of its producing pride, and thus incurring the risk of a fall from their state of monastic innocence and simplicity.

But to return to our devout inspector of the property of rich widows, it is certain that he followed so closely in pursuit of the lady in question, and made so much noise in his poor wooden clogs, that for peace-sake she was soon compelled to add her name to those of the third order, an arrangement from which the poor brethren drew a regular supply of alms, besides warm jackets, and richly worked tunics. But not content with this, and imagining nothing done while any thing remained to do, he placed

monks round her all day long, to remind her of the superior efficacy of endowing a whole chapel, if she really consulted the benefit of her soul. The lady, however, having four sons, at first thought it rather hard to rob them of their substance in favour of the monks, and being, like some of her sex, by no means liberally inclined, she tried to amuse them for some time with fair words, though resolved, in her own mind, to stick fast to her property. Just about the period that the good brethren imagined they had brought her over to their purpose, and succeeded in obtaining the mention of their new chapel in her will, it happened that she was taken suddenly unwell, and in spite of all medical assistance, died. Before breathing her last, she sent in haste for the superior of San Nazaro, to receive her dying confessions; who, imagining he was now about to reap the harvest of his toils, in laying such long siege to the widow's purse, very frankly told her how necessary it was, after having made confession, to shew a little more charity towards her own soul, while it remained yet in her power, and not to rely upon her sons offering up any sort of compensation for her sins in the way of alms and masses, after her decease. It was his duty to remind her of the fate of her friend Donna Leonora Caccia, the wife of

Messer Cervagio, doctor of laws, who, at the time he spoke, was suffering in purgatory, through the wicked neglect of her sons, who had never burnt a single taper since the day of her funeral. Alarmed at the idea of being in a similar predicament, and feeling extremely weak and troubled, such was the impression of the monk's oratory, that she was just on the point of yielding her consent, and calling for her will; but still balancing between the opposite interests of her soul and of her family, she declared that she would make up her mind before he should return again on the morrow. The good priest, shaking his head, reminded her of the danger of delay in a case of such paramount importance, and under pain of great future suffering, hinted at the propriety of the alteration being made before his return the next day. In the mean while, the widow's second son, Agabio, having in some way got scent of this negociation, communicated his fears to his brothers, who agreed with him that it was of the utmost consequence to overhear what should take place on the priest's return. So when Fra Serafino, the superior, arrived the next day, with the intention of concluding the bargain, Agabio took a station which enabled him to hear every word that passed; and such, he found, was the effect of the monk's elo-

quence, and so dreadful his denunciations of purgatory, that the poor lady was glad to receive absolution upon condition of leaving the sum of two hundred ducats for the purpose of endowing and ornamenting the chapel. Another hundred was to be appropriated to the purchase of the sacred vessels, and other articles, requisite to the celebration of mass in proper style, besides an annual festival, and a service for the souls of the dead. To these was to be added a small farm, situated very conveniently for the use of the poor brotherhood, at Camigliano, worth at least three thousand ducats; in consideration of which, having arranged every thing necessary respecting the title, and that the whole should be drawn up by a regular notary, as soon as possible, the happy monk absolved the good widow, and took his leave.

Agabio, who had heard all that passed, lost no time in acquainting his brothers, all of whom were of opinion that it was not an affair to be trifled with. So, after consulting some of their friends, they proceeded to their mother's chamber, and with some difficulty, by help of a less fastidious confessor, who absolved her on easier terms, they prevailed upon her to leave her will as it was. This done, they next despatched a confidential servant, with a message to the wily monk in their mother's name, begging that he would

no longer give himself the trouble of calling, as her sons, having got to hear the nature of his business, were bent upon doing him some grievous mischief, in case they should meet with him at her house; that she begged him at the same time not to make himself at all anxious upon the subject, as the holy brotherhood would find every thing arranged to their entire satisfaction in her last bequest.

Upon receiving these tidings, Fra Serafino took the hint, and giving himself no little credit for his successful negociation, he abstained from troubling the lady further. But in a few days he had the gratification of hearing that she had breathed her last, and directly hastened, according to his instructions, to the house of Ser Tomeno, the notary, who had already been apprised by Agabio in what way he was to act. By him he was informed that he ought immediately to wait upon Agabio and his brothers, into whose hands he had committed the will the day before, when he might possibly hear of something to his advantage. Without replying a single word, the delighted friar hastened to inspect its contents, and after duly condoling with the young men upon their loss, he came at once to the point, and requested Agabio to let him see the will. The latter, expressing his surprise at this question, requested to

son of his troubling himself with affairs ay concerned him, an observation at which the holy man began to express his dissatisfaction, but was threatened by Agabio with no very pleasing consequences, in case he did not forthwith proceed to take sanctuary in his own monastery. Not in the le daunted, however, at this reception, the wily monk made his bow with a malicious smile, and departed without deigning to say a word; and calling upon a certain Messer Niccola, procurator to the order, he put five soldi into his hands, and requested to know his opinion. Having heard the particulars of the case, Messer Niccola, without further hesitation, sent a summons to Ser Tomeno, Agabio's notary, citing him to appear before the bishop's vicar, with a copy of the last will and testament of the deceased.

Ser Tomeno, the moment he had perused this document, lost no time in acquainting Agabio with the progress of the affair, and he, desiring nothing better, took his attorney along with him, and called privately at the house of the vicar, who happening to be a particular friend of his, heard the whole proceedings from beginning to end, the good friar's long and difficult negociations, Agabio's stratagems to counteract him, and the commencement of the present

process. Now the vicar, as belonging ... of the priesthood, was by no means overburdened with affection towards the friars ... expressed his satisfaction at hearing what ... lowing day, at the hour appointed ... the ... to make their appearance, came Fra Serafino, accompanied by the procurator of his convent, both of whom were extremely noisy, and bent upon obtaining a sight of the will immediately. Agabio, in answer to their appeal, said: "Good Messer Vicar, may it please your reverence, I have not the slightest objection to the production of the will, provided that all the parties whose names are therein mentioned, consent to fulfil the articles, according to the letter, of whatever nature they may be."

"Say no more," interrupted the vicar; "all that is very clear; for our laws are very particular on this point, and whoever comes in for the benefit, must also incur the inconvenience of such bequests. Let us have this document, then; it is only what is lawful and reasonable!" and Agabio, instantly taking a scroll out of his pocket, handed it to the opposite notary for perusal. After running over the leading particulars relating to the heirs, and several legacies inserted for the purpose of giving the whole a greater air of reality, he came to the part that concerned the

ar, the tenor of which ran in the following manner: "ITEM, I will and bequeath, for the better preservation of my sons' fortune and for the general benefit [illegible] that there be given by [illegible] n, the amount of fifty [illegible] upon [illegible] Serafino, at this time being the guardian or superior of the convent of San Nazaro; and that the said lashes be of the best and soundest in the power of my sons' hands to inflict. And be it further stated, that these are intended to serve as an example to the rest of his brotherhood, how they venture in future to impose upon poor credulous women, or feeble old dotards, basely and maliciously persuading them to disinherit and impoverish their own flesh and blood, for the purpose of ornamenting cells and chapels."

Here the risible muscles of the notary would permit him to proceed no farther, and his laugh was speedily caught, and re-echoed through the whole court; insomuch that the poor friar, overwhelmed with ridicule and confusion, sought to make good his escape, and find the way back to his convent; though fully resolved in his own mind to bring the whole affair, in form of appeal, before the high apostolic chamber. But he was not doomed to end the matter in quite so honourable a manner, for Agabio, seizing

fast hold of his gown, exclaimed, "Tarry a little, holy father! why are you in such a hurry? I am come here for the purpose of fulfilling the conditions of the will, and these must be complied with;" and then appealing to the vicar, while he held the good father tight by his hand, "I require to know from you, as the judge, why father Serafino should not be entitled to the benefit of his bequest, mounted on the great horse, and receive from my hands the amount of the legacy due to him. If this be not granted, I shall feel bound to appeal to a superior tribunal against the undue partiality and injustice of this court." The good vicar, receiving the whole of this with an air of mock solemnity, turning towards Agabio, replied, "My good Messer Agabio, your beneficent intentions respecting the worthy father, no one surely can dispute; but I dare say he will be inclined to rest satisfied with them, without insisting upon the execution of the deed; in particular, as it might possibly bring some degree of scandal upon his cloth, while at the same time that it would be painful to him, such inheritance would produce no sort of benefit to the holy brotherhood. Besides if he be so truly disinterested, as not to wish to accept the kind bequest of your mother, I hardly see how you can venture to force it upon him, and I would rather

permit him to take his leave, with the noble consciousness that he bears no marks of your favour along with him."

Upon this hint Fra Serafino acted, and full of rage, fear, and vexation, retreated to his own abode, which he did not again quit for many days, out of apprehension of the ridicule of the people. His punishment, however, was followed by the desired effect; for, from that time forth, he was never known to solicit widow ladies for their fortunes to endow chapels, especially such as had families of sons, by whom he might again run the risk of being severely handled. As it was, he had the good fortune to escape martyrdom from their hands, and contrived to digest his spleen and disappointment by patience, as every good christian ought. According, however, to a different version of the story, trumped up, as supposed, by some of the friars, for the credit of their order, and as I was myself informed by one of them, that same wicked vicar had soon reason to repent of the part he bore in the affair, having to pay no less a fine than five hundred florins.

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year of Fortini's birth ... uncertain, though it is probable ... he ... during the earlier half of the sixteenth century ... from the entry of a date, remaining in the ... of St. Dominic, his decease seems to have ... in the year 1562. He was descended ... family, of some repute and ... and was in easy circumstances, as would appear from ... frequent residence at one of his villas ... named Monaciano, ... of the author's descendants. Judging, however, ... one of his letters addressed to B... from one of his novels, and from some ... interspersed throughout his Novelle ... of his life was destined to suffer ... an event, of which the particulars are unknown, but which was most probably connected ... those revolutionary movements which preceded the downfal of his native state.

It was during his residence in the country that his fictitious productions seem to have been composed, whether in honourable banishment, or remaining at his villa out of choice, does not clearly appear. Though they are mentioned as ... di fatti accaduti, più che favolosi, related ... turn by five young ladies and two gentlemen; yet ... would hope,

for the credit of the age, of the relaters, and of the hearers, that they were rather fabulous than true. The style, if not very pure, is extremely lively and pleasing, and each novel is closed with poetical pieces of more than common merit. They were published at Sienna, but the date of the first editions does not appear.

PIETRO FORTINI.

NOVELLA XIII.

In the noble city of Spoleti, in Umbria, there resided, not many years ago, a young man of the name of Anton Luigi Migliorelli, nobly born, but of a strange and whimsical disposition. Being also of a sanguine temperament, combined with too little judgment, he had the misfortune to imagine himself in love with a very beautiful and accomplished young lady, sprung from one of the first families in Spoleti, whose name was Fiordespina. What rendered the affair worse, she had already bestowed her hand in marriage upon another, a wealthy citizen of good descent, called Filolauro, from which his lady most generally went by the name of Fiordespina Lauri. In point of manly beauty and accomplishments, Filolauro was in no way unworthy of possessing so charming a companion; nor do I believe, that throughout all Italy there was a similar instance of conjugal union, happiness, and fidelity. Such indeed were the mutual sacrifices, the devotion, and tenderness

which they invariably displayed, as to afford a perfect pattern of the respective characters, and the conduct to be observed in so intimate an union. Their happiness seemed as if it were too exquisite and unalloyed to last; and the secret fiend that was about to invade the Eden of their love and repose, was already at work, inspiring the soul of Anton Luigi with thoughts equally dangerous to their safety and their honour. Ardently bent upon the pursuit of every object in which he engaged, and having frequent opportunities of enjoying the society, and observing the charms and ccomplishments, of the lovely Fiordespina, he gr w so deeply enamoured of them, that in a short time, he felt himself unable to control the expression of his feelings.

Yet, after having adopted every expedient in his power, all the arts and flatteries of which he was the master, he had the mortification to find that he not only made no progress in her good opinion, but that she did not even deign to notice his numerous efforts to conciliate and please her. Equally piqued and impassioned, he vowed to be revenged upon her supposed pride and indifference; while he was compelled at the same time to conceal his attentions as much as possible, as the manners of the people of Spoleti were far more strict in this respect than those of many

other places; persons of both sexes being in the habit of revenging themselves upon very slight provocation, and even of bearing arms, when occasion required, in open field against their enemies. And there is no point upon which they are more eager to proceed to extremities, than in regard to the honour of their women, so that they will scarcely permit the breath of heaven to play upon the faces of their married dames of rank, while the husbands, on the other hand, are not permitted to shew the least regard for single ladies. Thus our unfortunate lover found himself rather awkwardly situated; his feelings being about as unpleasant as those of a culprit preparing for his final journey, since his beloved Fiordespina paid no more attention to him, than if there had been no such person in the world; a behaviour which he felt far more difficult to bear than if she had honoured him with her resentment, or even her aversion and contempt.

In this dilemma he believed the wisest as well as the shortest way would be to put a period to his existence; but always when he was on the point of executing his threat, the idea that he was for ever leaving the beautiful Fiordespina flashed across his mind, and he relinquished it. Still he conceived it quite incumbent upon him, either to die like a true lover,

or win the lady's regard, and with this magnanimous resolution, he watched his first opportunity of obtaining a final interview with the lady. Happening to hear that Filolauro was about to accompany a party of young men on an excursion of pleasure into the country, he had no sooner watched the servant who followed him fairly out of sight, than he hastened to his house, but had the mortification to perceive the beloved object in company with two of her youthful companions. Upon this his exasperation was such as to mount to a degree of frenzy, and being in a most favourable mood for listening to the counsels of our great adversary, who is never known to neglect such happy opportunities of adding to the number of his subjects, he resolved in one way or other to bring the matter to a conclusion, whether it were by dagger, rope, or poison, that very evening. With this view he continued to keep watch, until after Filolauro's return, who being accustomed to walk out with his friends, sometimes as far as the Borgo San Maffio, when the evening was fine, upon this occasion did not take leave of them until near midnight. His beautiful wife, whose thoughts were ever with him in his absence, anxious at the lateness of the hour, was now eagerly looking out for him, after having prepared what viands she imagined would prove most

agreeable on his return. Filolauro had just reached the piazza near the fort, close to his own house, when he was met by Antonio Luigi, full of the most desperate designs; who, drawing his sword, cried out, in great fury: "At last, villain, thou art dead!" at the same moment wounding him severely. "Ah, traitor," exclaimed the other, "this to me!" and rushing upon him, he closed with him before he could make his escape. The noble lady, overhearing some disturbance, and recognizing her consort's voice, with the courage that distinguished the ladies of Spoleti, instantly seized her husband's javelin that lay at hand, and rushed to the door. There she indeed beheld him struggling in the grasp of his assassin, while his blood stained the ground upon which they fought; and sufficiently distinguishing the combatants by the light of the moon, with the strength of an Amazon, she passed the weapon through the body of Anton Luigi at a single blow. He instantly fell dead at her feet, while she, crying out to her husband that he was only wounded, besought him to take refuge in the house. By the time she had assisted him back, and restored the javelin to its place, a numerous crowd was collecting upon the spot, some of whom, observing the way they took, followed them into the house, where they found the lady attempting to

staunch her husband's wounds, at the same time trying to encourage him, and calling out for assistance. Discovering no weapon but the sword lying by the side of the deceased, they were unable to account for what they saw; and having borne the body of Anton Luigi into an adjoining church, and procured surgical aid for the wounded man, the people gradually dispersed.

On the following morning, the governor, hearing of the homicide, and no one being accused of it, thought it somewhat strange, and instituted a more strict inquiry. Being a native of Lucca, of severe character, and not very kindly disposed towards the ladies of Spoleti, he despatched his officers, at once, to the residence of the fair Fiordespina, with orders to seize her, together with her husband, the last of whom, wounded as he was, they threw into a dungeon. His unhappy wife was next conducted, bound, into the hall allotted for the execution of assassins, where, the evidence of some persons in the crowd being taken, she was actually condemned, by her merciless judge, to suffer the torture of the question. But rather than accuse either her husband or herself of having committed such an act, which she had reasons for knowing that her inexorable judge would never admit to have been done in self-defence, she chose to

submit, with the fortitude of a martyr, to every thing that his cruelty could devise. Moved with pity at her sufferings, several of the spectators voluntarily came forward to prove that no weapon, except that of the deceased, had been found upon the spot, and that it was hardly likely that a single woman could have deprived a soldier of his own sword, and of his life.

To this the savage tyrant only replied, that such was more probably the case, than that so noble a youth should have destroyed himself: and upon this he commanded the executioners to proceed. When, however, the populace, who believed her to be innocent, heard her renewed cries, there ran a confused murmur among the crowd, that, gradually assuming a louder and more angry tone, reminded the cruel governor that he had to deal with the proud and daring natives of Spoleti. Finding his victim resolutely bent against confession, he began to take the alarm, and ordering her to be set free, he consoled himself with the hope of inflicting still heavier punishment upon her husband. For this purpose he had him brought forth, and condemned to suffer yet more terrific pains than had been inflicted upon his wife. The moment, however, she beheld him in the presence of their ferocious tormentor, she was unable to

bear the very idea, much less the sight, of the most beloved object on earth, sharing with her the same fate. Although instant death became the penalty of her confession, yet, in order to spare him the suffering she had herself so nobly borne, she thus addressed the governor: "Unbind that gentleman, signor! Never let it be said that a savage and remorseless tyrant, such as thou art, had it in his power to inflict his savage torments upon the limbs of my honoured lord! No, it was I who did the deed. Hear me, I say! I alone smote the assassin of my husband dead at my feet. Oh! ye just heavens, ye noble people of Spoleti, be near me; aid me in my utter woe; let him not deprive me of the only object that is dear to these eyes." At once surprised and grieved to hear her declare herself guilty of an act by a confession which the severest tortures had failed to wring from her, the spectators, as well as the governor himself, struck with the excessive proof of affection which it displayed, were inclined to consider it as little less than miraculous. What must have been the excess of tenderness and attachment, that could excite the soul of a delicate woman to such an unexampled degree of heroism and magnanimity, as to confess, out of pity and affection for her husband, what she would otherwise have concealed, under the infliction of tor-

ture and of death itself! To such an appeal, even the heart of the governor, callous and ferocious as he was, could no longer be insensible. Taken by surprise, astonished at the grandeur and beauty of sentiment it displayed, and of which he had formed no previous idea, after remaining lost in doubt and wonder for some moments, his aspect assumed a perfectly opposite expression, and in milder tones than he had ever before perhaps uttered, he commanded the officers to unbind her husband. He next sent for the father of the deceased, requesting to know what course he wished to be pursued. The poor old man, thus unhappily deprived of his son, yet aware that no cause of enmity had subsisted between the families, nobly came forward to state every thing he knew relating to the unfortunate passion of his son, and boldly taxed the governor with the most culpable conduct, in having omitted to receive his evidence, until he had unjustly condemned the innocent to suffer. At the same time he tenderly embraced the unhappy prisoners, and weeping over the guilty conduct of his son, appealed to the feelings of the spectators, conjuring them to join in soliciting a free pardon, if pardon it could be called, where no offence had been committed, at the hands of the governor. The relenting feelings of the latter at length yielded

to the energy and truth of the old man's appeal; for, having liberated the captives, he descended from his judgment-seat, and struggling with contending emotions, turned away from the spectators, and soon disappeared.

Novels of Gentile Sermini.

GENTILE SERMINI.

It has been a fertile source of dispute among the historical critics of Italy, more especially those of Sienna, to fix the precise period in which this writer flourished. This would appear, in a great measure, to have arisen from the novelist's own desire to antedate his productions, conferring upon them a more antiquated style and character, (doubtless in order to rank in the list of earlier and purer writers,) than was usual with the less studied novelists of his own day. Thus, if we are to give credit to his own account, as contained in a MS. discovered, and treated of by Apostolo Zeno, in his Annotations upon Fontanini, he must have flourished about the time of Boccaccio, to whom, in order to give more probability to his story, he directs a letter; and the frequent allusions, throughout his work, would lead us to suppose that he wrote about the year 1349. Upon the authority of Zeno, we are bound to believe that he really lived during the middle or latter half of the fifteenth century, while by others he is referred to a still later period. From the same author we learn that he belonged to a Siennese family, and produced about

forty-five novels, two others being subsequently discovered by him, or at least one, divided into two in the MS. by the copyist, a very sufficient ground for an Italian controversy; and that they were, according to the usual practice, of a somewhat corrupt style and free character. The MS. was considered by Zeno as extremely valuable, being an only copy, and attributed by him to an earlier period than it deserved. Written upon parchment, its whole style and character seemed to authorise the supposition of its having originated two or three centuries before the critic's time, when in fact it has since been proved to belong to the latter part of the fifteenth, or to the beginning of the sixteenth century. To each of the Tales is prefixed the usual title, explaining its nature, written in red characters; and in addition to the stories, there is inserted a singular specimen of idiomatic phraseology, entitled, *Il Giuoco della Pugna*, a feigned letter to a friend, and a number of sonnets, canzoni, and ballate, amounting to thirty-four. We further learn from Signor Pellegrini, that an attempt was made to retouch, or rather to injure a portion of this beautiful MS. in the text, by altering the commencing letters *Tu*, so as to read *Voi*, which but too plainly appears, though happily this species of mutilation was not carried much further.—(*Lettera Dedicatoria.*)

GENTILE SERMINI.

NOVELLA III.

In the province of Cabar, in Asia, there once flourished two noble and magnificent cities, situated within ten leagues of each other, called Soriana and Belfiore. Jealous of their respective power and influence, they merely observed an external shew of amity, and, though engaged in commercial intercourse, they never cordially united together. The people of Soriana being the most powerful of the two, frequently threatened the independence of those of Belfiore, and attempted by every means in their power to weaken and humiliate them. Well aware of their danger, the latter, rather than submit an inch of their dominions to the sovereignty of the Soriani, were prepared to throw themselves into the arms of the Christians or the Jews, and even to renounce the faith of their ancestors. Now, in the city of Belfiore, there was a noble youth of the name of Gallio, who happened to be deeply enamoured of a young girl, named Cardina, daughter of the great Marmoreo;

who, strongly opposing the attachment of the young people, took measures to have the lover falsely accused, and declared a rebel to the state. Immediately after his banishment, Gallio set out for the city of Soriana, and there learning that Marmoreo himself had been the author of his disgrace, stung with a feeling of resentment, he adopted the most subtle plans of revenge (inveighing bitterly against the father), all of which he as suddenly abandoned, when he reflected upon the unaltered passion which he felt for the daughter.

At such times he would exclaim, "Oh wretched, wretched Gallio! How dare I even imagine these means of revenge? revenge, at the expense of my beloved Cardina. To injure her father is to injure her; her, whom I must ever worship, and ever serve, though the daughter of my bitterest enemy? Oh distraction! I am torn with contending duties; I am injured and I burn for revenge; I love, and yet I am about to offend the object of my idolatry. For, alas, I must do it, or remain for ever dishonoured! Hath he not driven me forth, as a rebel and a traitor, from my native place? Yet thou, my love, my Cardina, wert not here to blame; for I fondly trust thou hast shed tears over my lot. When shall I behold thee, when return to Belfiore again? Oh ye gods,

that I could cease to think, cease to exist, under the cruel thoughts that rack me! For revenge ought to call louder than my love, and yet I know I can do nothing to displease her. Fester thy base heart, Marmoreo, that could conceive the foul and vindictive purpose of rendering me the veriest wretch that loads earth's weary bosom, weary of such monsters as thee!"

Gallio having thus resolved to abandon all measures of vengeance, absence and hopelessness had soon the effect of weakening his love. In the course of a year or two, the image of Cardina ceased to haunt his fancy; but feelings of revenge and hatred, on the other hand, seemed to have usurped its place. She no longer continued to stand, like a good genius, between him and her father; and after revolving a thousand schemes of vengeance in his mind, he resolved, in order to deprive his enemy both of his authority and his life, to attempt the subjugation of his countrymen under the yoke of the Soriani. With this view he made himself acquainted with a party, whose secret object was to watch every opportunity of rendering themselves masters of Belfiore. The number appointed consisted of fifteen, and to these Gallio discovered his design of subjecting his native place, observing, at the same time, "I require of you

nothing further than the power of disposing, as I please, of the persons of Marmoreo and Cardina; the one for the sake of vengeance; the other, I trust, to be treated in a kinder way." To this the confederates gave their ready consent, and the conspiracy was matured before the beginning of the ensuing year; while a number of persons, amounting to sixty, of Sorian families which had long resided at Belfiore, united with them, in order better to betray the place. Among these, Saladino, who had the command of the Porta Marina, was the most powerful, his family having enjoyed many lucrative offices of high trust in Belfiore, during a period of nearly two hundred years. With him, Gallio and his party arranged the manner in which they were to be admitted through the said gate; and at the appointed hour the whole force of the Soriani was secretly marched by night into the province of Belfiore. Gallio, having been intensely engaged during many days previous, allowing himself little time for sleep, devoted a few moments to repose before setting out on his final exploit, and tried to compose himself to rest. In this state of suspense, the idea of Cardina naturally occurred to his mind; and the goddess of love attempting, from compassion, to counteract the influence of Mars and Saturn, that so greatly predo-

minated in him, presented her image in his slumbers, arrayed in more than her usual beauty, and with an expression of sorrow and tenderness in her countenance, while she seemed to say, that her everlasting love and gratitude should be the reward of his forbearance, if he would consent to abandon his cruel and sanguinary designs. So vivid was the impression upon his mind, that opening his arms as if to embrace her, he awoke, and found he had clasped only his sword, that lay at his side. With a feeling of rage and disappointment, he felt inclined to turn it against his own bosom, so strongly had his dream affected him, and altered his previous resolution of persevering in his enterprise. His love for Cardina, also, seemed to acquire renewed strength; and recollecting every word and action of the vision, his desire of vengeance, and all his bitter hatred against her father was forgotten, as he burst into a passionate flood of tears. Then the hopes of mutual passion which she appeared to hold out to him in his dreams, and the expression of her grief and trouble, all combined to turn the tide of his feelings into a more loyal and patriotic course. Suddenly, acting under the impulse of this change, he summoned his fellow conspirators, exiles, like himself, from Belfiore, to a secret meeting, and proceeded to address them in the fol-

lowing words: "Fellow citizens and brothers! Can it be true that we are about to destroy the place that gave us birth, and to betray the city of our ancestors into the hands of her deadliest foes? Let us pause ere we produce irreparable evils, that may call down on us the execration of posterity, by turning our arms against our native land, that ought to be directed against its enemies. Alas! how shall we bear to see the Soriani lords of us and of our countrymen, ourselves the worst of vassals? for let us not flatter ourselves that we shall reap other than the traitor's reward. Honour and treachery are yet in our power to choose. Fellow citizens, which shall we embrace?" "Honour and our country!" exclaimed all with one voice. "Stay, hear me further," cried Gallio, taking advantage of the enthusiasm he had produced; "a messenger is just arrived, bringing me such tidings, that if you have heart to join me, we will return to our own city, but not without the glory of having first vanquished its enemies." Inspired with the fervour of his patriotism, the whole of his companions promised to follow him whithersoever he would lead. "Then," cried Gallio, "let one of you attend me;" and he selected the man he wished, "and let the rest await us here!" Having thus agreed upon the course they were to pursue, Gallio,

along with his companion, affected to proceed with the scheme as before, and under the pretence of an interview with Saladino, the governor of the Porta Marina, in order to fix upon the signals that were to be given for entering into the city of Belfiore, they proceeded forwards on horseback, until they reached Castel Fioralto, of which the governor, Parione, was one of the principal citizens, and strongly exasperated against the people of Soriana, on account of their having cruelly slain his father; and with him they took further counsel about their plans. On his inquiring into the cause of their arrival, Gallio replied, "We are come to inform you that it is in our power either to destroy or make our city twice as powerful as it is; and as we are quite aware of your wishes, we shall reveal every thing to you just as it occurred."

On hearing the particulars, Parione expressed his entire concurrence, and united in their plans with the utmost joy. Having matured these, and sworn fidelity to each other, Parione, speedily mounting horse, took his leave, and arrived before sunset at Belfiore, where presenting himself before Patrioni, master of the palace where the seignory held their sittings, he desired him to call a secret meeting of a hundred of the chief citizens of the place. This done, and the

subject being proposed, it met with the general approbation of the whole assembly: and instantly closing all the gates, and doubling the guards, they gave orders for the arrest of Saladino, and the sixty conspirators, ready prepared for the undertaking. Upon being subjected to the question, and confronted with Gallio, they made confession, and were placed in strict confinement. The whole city, in the mean time, was put under arms and prepared for the reception of the force of the Soriani, led on by Gallio. About two hours before day-light, the tramp of horse was heard approaching; and Saladino was compelled to open the gate, as had been agreed upon, at the appointed signals, betraying his party to destruction, on condition that his own and his children's lives should be spared; the whole of his family, in case of his failure, being involved in one common ruin. When the time approached, therefore, though desirous of saving his own party, he opened the gates by command of Gallio, and the hostile force, led on by the chief citizens of Soriana, rushed forward into the city. Many of the leaders were richly armed and caparisoned, vieing with each other in the splendor of their appearance, and shining with gold and precious gems, ornaments in which their country abounded. Add to these, the great variety of burnished shields, lances,

bows, and quivers, with dark plumes nodding in the air, and the flash of arms glittering through the moon-light. Thus proudly decorated, are the Soriani accustomed to march forth to meet their enemies in the open field, the chief lords and gentlemen eagerly pressing forward in the van, leaving the least considerable of the citizens to bring up the rear. Marshalled accordingly in their best array, the Soriani now arrived at the Porta Marina, where, received by Saladino, they believed themselves upon the point of becoming masters of the city. By the advice of Gallio, they immediately marched forward, and took possession of the cloister of Diana's temple, to the number of six thousand men, while three thousand were held in reserve in the temple of Mercury. Before day-break, however, just as they imagined they were on the point of striking a decisive blow, they were startled by the loud clash of arms above them, and looking up, beheld crowds of armed men lining the walls of the great cloister of Diana, the chiefs of whom addressed the astonished Soriani with the cry of: "Yield, traitors, yield; or death to our prisoners!" at the same time showering down loads of burning combustibles upon their heads, so as to convince them they had not the least chance of escape. After some threats of rage and

MAHARAJA SERF... ATI MAHAL

despair, the Soriani, finding every means of opposition useless, were induced to surrender, and threw down their arms. The whole of their rich equipage, and all their golden ornaments, became the spoil of their adversaries, while they were themselves led away in ranks of ten, to be consigned to the gloomy dungeons of Sabar. Their great commander Rabooth, who guarded the temple of Mercury with his three thousand soldiers, shortly afterwards met with the same fate, appealing only to the mercy of his victorious enemy. By the intercession of Gallio, he was pardoned on the following conditions: that he should make oath never again to enter into the city of Soriana, or attempt any thing against his victorious enemy. After making a solemn engagement to this effect, he was allowed to go free, and directly took his departure from the city; establishing his residence, with his companions, at Sarbonia, one hundred leagues from Soriana. The Belfioresi, then returning in triumphal procession to the grand cloister of Diana, collected the spoils of their adversaries, and carried them afterwards to their palace-master, who appropriated them to the benefit of the community. They next proceeded to witness the execution of the treacherous friends of Saladino, who had entered into terms with Gallio to betray

their country, and who now were led forth into the large square to the number of sixty-five, all of whom were quartered alive. Over the heads of the traitor and his sons, whose lives were spared, was written in large letters, the result of the invasion, in the following manner: "We, the people of Belfiore, have revenged ourselves upon our enemies, by turning their arms against themselves; let the traitor Saladino bear witness to this. We send him and his children to you, with his companions, all of whom may be known by the tickets appended to their necks; the rest of the soldiers, for good reasons, we, the people of Belfiore, think proper to retain. Moreover, we decree, that in future, no native of Soriana shall become resident in our city, or dare to assume the name of a Belfiorese, that he may no longer enjoy the advantage of betraying us, and of turning our hospitality into our ruin."

Along with this fatal proclamation were sent four cart-loads, filled with the dead bodies of their enemies, which reached about night-fall, the gates of Soriana, whose inhabitants were expecting the arrival of their countrymen with a very different escort. Upon the return of the party to Belfiore, a grand tournament, with festivals of every kind, was proclaimed for the people, to be continued during a series of

many weeks. Gallio, who had now greatly distinguished himself in the eyes of the Belfioresi, ordered a great feast in honour of the victory, and proceeded with a numerous party to wait upon Patrioni, grand-master of the palace, requesting an assemblage of the chief citizens, to which Marmoreo, and his daughter Cardina, should be invited. When met together, Gallio entered with a train of friends and nobles, and harangued them in the following words: "My honoured fathers, senators, and chiefs of bands! when I contemplate the singular degree of prudence, fortitude, temperance, and valour, with which you have hitherto conducted your affairs, I bow to the decree that rendered me an unhappy exile from my native land. Nor am I here come to question the justice of the proceeding instituted against me by your learned and distinguished citizen Marmoreo, though I still remain in ignorance of his motives. Rather would I accuse myself, in having been so unfortunate as to draw down upon myself the weight of your displeasure: for which I do here humbly entreat your forgiveness, more especially in consideration of my tender age; not presuming to make other defence, or set up any better excuse. And so far am I sensible of your high wisdom and authority, and of my own slight deserts, that I am here ready to deliver myself

up to your judgment once more, as a traitor to my country, and the author of the hateful and sacrilegious plot just attempted by your enemies. True, it was I, and I alone, who brought the whole secret power of Soriana into the bosom of your homes, who induced Saladino, with his fellow-traitors, on whom you had conferred your offices of trust and honour, to league with your foes in this nefarious design, and open to us your gates, that we might bring you under the yoke of Soriana, from which you are now fortunately for ever free. And let me caution you, before I yield my forfeit life, never in future to commit offices of trust, or the command of gates, to the Soriani, or to any other foreigners upon the face of the earth. It is enough to grant them passports through your dominions; but to make them governors over gates and citadels is the height of infatuation, for the love of country never becomes entirely obliterated from the human breast. Now, as the unhappy cause of the great evil that had so nearly befallen the state, I surrender my person into your hands, entreating only, with my dying prayers, that the glory and triumph of our last noble enterprize may be wholly attributed to the youthful and beauteous Cardina, whose many virtues have produced, by their influence over my soul, the present happy

result. It was she who snatched the patricidal sword out of my hand, who, when I was bent on the irretrievable destruction of her father and her friends, stood between us, like a guardian angel of peace; and with her tender and sorrowful aspect, her passionate tears, and sweet appeals to my love and honour, restored me to higher and better thoughts, pointing out to me the path of patriotic duty that I have since pursued. If, then, death be due to me as a traitor, to her let triumphal arches, and honours befitting a queen, be afforded, let her praises be sung over my obsequies, let her be called the saviour of Belfiore, and soothe my wounded spirit ere it take its final flight!" Here Gallio became silent, and kneeling in the midst of the council, he raised his hands, as if in prayer, while his eyes were bent upon the ground, and awaited in this attitude his sentence. The chiefs and elders of the city, imagining that Gallio would have closed his harangue by soliciting honours and rewards for his great services, having risen by his last exploit high in the estimation of all ranks, were surprised at such proofs of unfeigned humility and contrition, and began to consider him in a still nobler point of view than before: mingled tears, congratulations, and applause, followed the conclusion of his address. But the emotions of Cardina and her

father, the author of all Gallio's sufferings, far surpassed those of any others present: the lady's tears flowed passionately and uncontrolled; her sobs drowned her voice when she attempted to intercede for him; while the more silent, but deep and painful struggles of her father, torn as he was by the sense of ingratitude and remorse, produced a sensation of awe and trouble throughout the assembly. It was evident that the lovers had long been attached to each other; that he must have opposed their union by the most cruel and unjustifiable measures, and a feeling of compassion for both soon communicated itself to the people, who rushing forward with wild and tumultuous cries, demanded the head of Marmoreo, and declared Gallio their liege lord and prince. The chiefs and elders, yielding to the popular commotion, rose from their seats, and deputing one of their members to bear the ensigns of authority, they placed the gold staff in the hands of their new master. After a due decree of modest refusal and deference to the superior claims of the aged senators, Gallio was induced to accept the government of the state, and, mounting the sovereign tribunal, in an harangue to the people, expressed his gratitude for the high trust reposed in him. The people, then becoming acquainted with his attachment to the lady Cardina, unanimously insisted

upon her taking her place, as his bride elect, at his side; the sole condition upon which they consented to spare the life of the treacherous and cruel Marmoreo. The nuptials were accordingly soon after solemnized in the most splendid manner, followed by every variety of games and jousts, and such exhibitions as were best adapted to gratify the taste of the people. Wherever Gallio made his appearance, he was welcomed with the most enthusiastic shouts of applause, as the beloved sovereign of his people; and he long continued lord of Belfiore, blest in the affections of the wise and beautiful Cardina, and esteemed for his equal administration of the laws. The season of these joyous festivals being over, it was resolved in council that the dungeons of Sabar should be blocked up on all sides, with the six thousand Sorian soldiers enclosed within; all of whom thus miserably perished. A herald was next despatched to summon the city of Soriana, which was soon compelled to send in its submission to Gallio, and was annexed to his dominions.

NOVELLA VIII.

In the province of Soria there once flourished two rival chiefs, one of whom was named Alvigi, Count of Monforte, the other the Marquess Sivero, lord of a rich city called Belvaso, whose domains were situated within two days' march of each other. Having long tried their respective skill and valour, with various fortune, against each other, Alvigi at length took up a position close to Belvaso, which he frequently attacked with fury. The marquess, on his part, made several desperate assaults upon his enemy's camp, which he found, however, so strongly entrenched, that one day, after a severe action, his troops were put to flight, and he himself slain upon the field. On the ensuing day his castle and dominions fell into the hands of the conqueror, who, believing he had taken ample revenge for past injuries, and using his victory with moderation, received the inhabitants of Belvaso into the rank of his faithful subjects, declaring that all cause of enmity had ceased with the death of the marquess, and that his sole wish was to render them happy under their new government. Grateful for this kind treatment, the Belvasesi submitted quietly to his

sway, and he admitted them to the same privileges as were enjoyed by the subjects of his own state. A season of peace and prosperity followed, interrupted only by occasional feuds between the chief citizens, the most serious of which arose out of the jealousy of two, named Macidonio and Cherubino. The former was at the head of one of the richest families in Belvaso, extremely proud, and envious of the authority of his compeers, while Cherubino was a man held in high esteem for his valor and fidelity, and possessed of considerable reputation and influence. Exasperated at the superior confidence reposed in him, Macidonio resolved to make use of every art to banish him from the capital, being fully bent upon ruining him, or perishing in the attempt. For this purpose he began gradually to infuse suspicions of his fidelity into the count's mind, availing himself of the arts of one of his kinsmen named Savojetto, originally from Belvaso, though his family had become naturalized in Monforte. He it was, who possessing the private ear of Count Alvigi, consented to ruin Cherubino in his master's favour, by insinuating that he had been dissatisfied with his government ever since the loss of his late master the Marquess Sivero, whose device he even yet carried; and as he was known to possess great influence and courage, he

might render himself extremely formidable in case of any popular commotion. In this way he continued to insinuate doubts of the noble Cherubino into the mind of the count, until the latter, alarmed and incensed at what he heard, despatched a messenger for him. Aware of the plot that had been concerted between Macidonio and Savojetto, and certain of encountering the anger of his lord, he nevertheless determined to obey, conscious of his perfect innocence, and despising the intrigues of his enemies. These last, dreading lest he should be able to answer their calumnies, and retort the charges upon themselves, anxiously spread abroad reports, that the count, in great indignation, had resolved to sacrifice him to the offended laws of his country. So far, however, from deterring him from appearing, these rumours added to his desire of meeting his calumniators, and summoning his four sons to attend him, they speedily mounted horse, and arrived the next day at Monforte. They rode directly to the palace, and requested the master to obtain an interview for them as soon as possible. Without waiting, therefore, to refresh themselves, they attended the summons to council, where Cherubino, kneeling with his sons before the count, with much humility and reverence, requested to know his commands.

"Ah," cried the count in a tone of surprise, "is it indeed Cherubino, the last man whom I should have expected to behold here? Still, you are welcome; but you look fatigued with your long ride. And your fine boys here too! This is passing strange; but take a little repose; you shall hear further from us to-morrow." To this, Cherubino, in the most open, yet respectful manner, replied, "Speak, not, my noble lord, of weariness in your service; shew in what way I can promote your honour or your authority, and I will not be found the last in the race of duty or valorous achievement. I only now crave, that here, in your illustrious council, before the judge from whom I ought to expect my sentence, I may plead in my own defence: for I am too well aware that reports have been industriously circulated highly injurious to my character, and that the authors of them, whom I know, in order to intimidate me, and render me still more guilty in your eyes, threatened me with death if I dared to appear in your presence. But this has brought me only the sooner to your feet; let them attempt to disgrace me as they will, I have served you faithfully, and I will hear my sentence from your own lips, as I was accustomed to appeal face to face against my enemies before my late lord and master. It is said, indeed, that because I served him faith-

fully, I must prove a traitor to you, and there are those here who wish to persuade you of it, out of secret malice and revenge. True it is that the Marquess Sivero always found loyal followers both in my father and myself, for we never served other master, and he never abused his authority, so as to give us any cause of just complaint. To him we owe the fortunes of our house, he honored and promoted me, entrusted me with his secret councils, and I can do no less than respect his memory, as I should not otherwise be worthy of receiving a benefit from any future master, but rather of his severest reprehension, suspicion, and contempt. And as it has at length pleased heaven to render you, by rightful conquest, the lord and master to whom I owe allegiance, since the death of my late honoured chief; so I shall never be found wanting in devotion and fidelity to your service: and the more that, tracing my origin to Monforte, and from the House of Liona, I may now consider myself restored to my native land." And having clearly proved to the count's satisfaction that such was the real truth, the latter began to regard both him and his sons with a more auspicious aspect, and, acknowledging the frankness with which he spoke, he turned to his accusers, and, in particular, to Savojetto, who had already frequently attempted to interrupt the ac-

cused; and who now addressing the count, maintained that it would be a sufficient answer, to point to the device of the Marquess Sivero, which was still borne by the treacherous Cherubino; a sufficient proof of his sentiments. But Cherubino, here feigning entire ignorance of the person of Savojetto, who had been bribed to make these charges, with an air of indifference inquired his name, and receiving an answer from Savojetto, he continued, "Why, sir, it is one thing to carry the device of our leader upon our arms, and another to bear it stamped upon our hearts. Now tell me, Savojetto, whether do you think it a fouler wrong, to betray a master who has heaped riches and honours upon you, or, like me, who bear equal rank with the marquess, to prove faithful and loyal to him while he lived?" To this his calumniator replied, "You are very bold, thus to defend the character of that arch-traitor, Sivero; but I should consider myself as a still more detestable villain, were I capable of harbouring a thought against the honour or dignity of my liege lord, Alvigi, whose presence you thus outrage with your indecent praises of his bitterest foe." "We war not with the dead," was the reply of Cherubino, as he turned from him, with an air of contempt, towards the lord Alvigi, adding, with the same open and unembarrassed mien, "As you

have justly given me free license to defend myself, I shall now avail myself of it, as my calumniator has thus challenged me to the trial, to prove that, of the two, I am the most loyal subject, and that Savojetto is only a creature in the hands of Macidonio, bribed to rob me of my honour, if not of my life." The count, with one of his most angry frowns, here interrupting him, exclaimed, "How say you, Cherubino? Take heed of your safety, and prove your words good, or your head is not long your own." "Cast it, then, at the feet of my enemies," replied Cherubino, "if I fix not the name of traitor upon my accuser. This Savojetto possesses your confidence; I know he is originally from Belvaso, of the family of Sanguigni, and related to his friend Macidonio. During the late war he was one of your council, the whole of whose deliberations he communicated to Macidonio, by which we were long enabled to counteract all your plans, your open attacks and secret ambushes, in such a manner as frequently to give us the advantage. Let him attempt to deny this as he will, I have here a letter signed by his own hand, informing our party, ten days before, of your intention to burn the city-gate in your attack upon the first day of April, while, at the same time, you would attempt to carry the place by assault, employing moreover a hundred fui-

ners for the purpose of blowing up our citadel. This precious document falling, as chance would have it, into my hands, I have kept it secret, in order to spare the author until the present time. Still, you may recollect of what essential service it was to us, for when you assaulted our gates, you found them converted into iron, and so stoutly defended, that you were that morning compelled to retreat with loss. You met with the same kind of reception from us, and owing to the same cause, at the fort; insomuch that we might consider the traitor Savojetto as the author of many of our victories, and of your reverses." At the same time he handed the proofs of his treason to the count, adding, that it was now become his duty to acquaint him, as his liege lord, with every secret of state. The same motives that led him to observe the utmost fidelity to his former master, now actuated him in regard to the honour and safety of Alvigi; having been restored to his native place, and received into the service of a valiant and gracious prince. Here Cherubino ceased, and the dark frown was observed to gather on the brow of Count Alvigi. Savojetto attempted in vain to defend himself; he ventured not to encounter the eye of his master, and his confusion and detection being but too evident, he was ordered into custody, while the count sent a

fresh summons for Macidonio. On his arrival, he thus addressed him: "I wish not to reproach you, Macidonio, for your fidelity to your late lord and master; on the contrary, I greatly applaud you for your exertions in his favour. Therefore I forgave all the past injuries I had suffered at your hands: I gave your city the same privileges and advantages as were enjoyed by my own subjects; and you have yourself no reason to consider me in the light of a conqueror, or of a harsh master. Why, then, have you conspired against an innocent man? Why attempted, by the foulest arts, to ruin the noble Cherubino in my favour? Since you found your hands and your tongue such ready instruments of offence against your noble countryman, since you attempted with them to deprive him of his life and honour, let them suffer the penalty due to such a crime."

The count then sentenced him to lose his hands and tongue, by the public executioner, as a lasting proof of perfidy and ingratitude, in bearing false witness and suborning others, against the honour of his compeer, his fellow countryman, and his neighbour. Turning next towards his colleague Savojetto, he continued: "As for thee, thou basest and most perfidious of villains, thou whom I have loaded with riches and honours, and called by the familiar

names of counsellor, companion, and friend, while thou hast repeatedly perjured thy soul with a thousand false oaths of loyalty and truth; tell me what species of death, what thousand tortures are enough to expiate thy black ingratitude? The justice upon thy head, however inadequate, shall at least be retributive:" and forthwith the count summoned together all the surviving relatives of those whom the arch traitor had basely betrayed to death, in the attacks upon the gate and citadel of Belvaso. Seizing upon the body of Savojetto with the insatiate thirst of revenge, they bound him alive to a column, and made him a mark to shoot at for their amusement. They next proceeded to hang, to draw, and quarter him, dividing his limbs between the different gates of Monforte, while they placed his head upon the walls of the great palace, on the sides of which were ordered to be erected two marble pillars. On one of these was engraved the number of honours and benefits lavished upon the traitor Savojetto, while the other was painted red to denote his family name of Sanguigna, tracing its origin to Belvaso, and on this was written the amount of all the treason and ingratitude received from him in return by the noble count, with the loss attending it. In the middle of the chain, suspended between the two columns, was seen the head of the

culprit, fixed in such a way that no one could either reach or remove it, and the columns were so situated, that none of the members belonging to the count's council could pass and repass to their hall, without being reminded of their duty by going under them. The possessions of Savojetto were next distributed among the persons who had revenged their slaughtered relatives upon the body of their cruel enemy; and shortly afterwards fourteen of his fellow traitors and conspirators were discovered and executed in the city of Monforte.

When this impressive tragedy was concluded, the count, turning towards the noble Cherubino, with a joyous countenance, said: "Now, my good and faithful servant, the fruits of thy worth and fidelity are seen. Having happily rid my dominions of traitors, do thou, my friend, receive all the honours and privileges which they enjoyed, and take thy seat at my right hand."

Novels of Giovanni Brevio.

GIOVANNI BREVIO.

The tales attributed to this novelist are by no means so abundant as those of most of his contemporaries; consisting only of six, out of which a still smaller number has been found adapted to the present purpose. Giovanni Brevio was by birth a Venetian, and a canon of Ceneda, under which title he is frequently mentioned by different authors, as having visited Rome in the year 1545; a circumstance which marks with sufficient precision, the period in which he flourished. The additional particulars of this author's life are extremely scanty. It is merely known that he had an uncle, auditor of Rota, and bishop of Ceneda, which may account for the ecclesiastical office enjoyed by himself, and for his attendance at Rome in 1545; some doubts having been entertained whether he was indeed the same Giovanni, whose presence there at that period is noticed by contemporary writers. He is said to have been a respectable poet as well as a novelist, and produced many beautiful pieces, adapted for Italian music.

From one of his sonnets addressed to his friend Luca Bonfio, we learn, that wearied with his residence at Rome, he sighed for the enjoyment of a more peaceful and pleasant life among the Euganean hills, not far from Padua. On this subject he observes at the close:

"Quanto t'invidio, O mio fedele e caro,
La dolce vita d'ogni cura sciolta,
Di che a me sempre il ciel fu tanto avaro."

"How much, dear friend, I envy thee that sweet
And quiet life, from every turmoil free,
Which my sad fate hath still denied to me."

Under these circumstances, he consoled himself by writing an express treatise on the "Vita Tranquilla," that tranquil life, the possession of which he appears to have so much envied in his friend. It was published, together with his Tales and Poems, at Rome, in the year 1545, in one volume, octavo.

He was intimate with most of the celebrated wits and scholars of his day, and in particular with the poet and courtier Berni, one of the most spirited and amusing writers of the time. Although the language of Brevio can boast neither the ease nor clearness of some of the earlier novelists, and is strongly tinctured with the prevailing dialect of his native district, he is nevertheless to be enumerated, in other

points, among the happiest and most ingenious writers of his age. His stories are in general told with considerable ease and vivacity of manner, and the incidents are arranged in a way well calculated to interest the attention of his readers.

The second novel of the series is a story of a priest, who by forging his own letters of recommendation, passes for a cardinal, and is entertained as such by the persons on whom he imposed them. This, with the third novel, will be found in the following selection, the last of which has been more than once imitated by the dramatists of different countries. It is the subject of Piron's comedy of "Les Fils Ingrats," entitled also "L'Ecole des Pères," which was played in 1728, about the period of the introduction of the "Comédie Larmoyante." It likewise forms one of the "Pieuse Récréations" of Angelin Gazée, and one of the "Colloquia Mensalia" of Luther, where it is mentioned, among other examples, as a warning to those fond fathers who distribute their property, during their lifetime, among their children; "a practice," observes Mr. Dunlop,* "to which they are in general little addicted.

"The fourth novel," continues Mr. Dunlop, "in-

* History of Fiction, vol. ii. p. 411.

the renowned tale of Belfagor. This story, with merely a difference of names, was originally told in an old Latin MS., which is now lost, but which, till the period of the civil wars in France, remained in the library of Saint Martin de Tours. But whether Brevio or Machiavel first exhibited the tale in an Italian garb, has been a matter of dispute among the critics of their country. It was printed by Brevio during his life, and under his own name, in 1545; and with the name of Machiavel in 1549, which was about eighteen years after the death of that historian. Both writers probably borrowed the incidents from the Latin MS., for they could scarcely have copied from each other. The story is besides in the Nights of Straparola, but much mutilated, and has also been imitated by Fontaine."

GIOVANNI BREVIO.

NOVELLA II.

There was formerly a priest of Piperno, named Antonio, but ill deserving of the sacred character, inasmuch as, from his earliest youth, he evinced a decided disposition to defraud and to impose upon the unwary, which he effected in a variety of ways. Having occasion once to leave Piperno, he repaired to Naples, and it there occurred to him to put into practice one of the happiest tricks he had ever invented, for which purpose he made preparations to depart for Rome. Before taking his leave of Naples, he entreated Angelo Romano, who had long resided there, to furnish him with a letter of introduction to his brother Luca, a saddler, living at Rome, in order that he might pay some little attentions to him, a request with which Romano immediately complied. Having accordingly obtained the letter, he proceeded on his way, and on approaching Rome, began to examine its contents. Imagining that it was wanting in warmth of recom-

mendation and encomium, he thought it most advisable to compose another in its place, which he soon produced, in a very happy imitation of the hand of Angelo, to the following tenor: "Dear brother Luca! You will receive this from the hands of his Excellency, a very kind patron of mine, who is now, for certain important reasons, travelling incognito, on some very urgent affairs, into France. He is a noble prelate, holding several rich benefices, and the superior of many monasteries in the Cremonese, as well as in Avignon: though I do not just at present recollect the name of his see. You will, therefore, take care, for your own sake, to show him every possible respect and attention; when perhaps you may be happy enough to induce him to take up his residence at your house, while he remains at Rome. He brings with him only two servants, but more will shortly follow from this place, as well as from Cremona and Piacenza. He will stay in Rome during some days, and you must dispose of the horses as you can best contrive. Should you not be in a situation from your late losses to treat him in a manner worthy of his rank, I would advise you to mortgage every thing you possess, to show your wish to please him, as you may depend upon it, you will find your interest in so doing. Not that he himself

stands in need of such a reception; for would to heaven our whole fortune equalled what he carries along with him: but the truth is, you will find your account in it. You know the old saying: 'It is well to bait with a little fish to catch a great one.' (E buono gettar una sardella per prendere un luccio.) He knows you are one of my family, and that you have a fine boy about fifteen years old, whom he told me he should be very glad to bring forward in the world. He will not fail to be of use to us in our difficulties, for he is certainly well inclined towards us. At least your Marc Antonio will come in for one of his benefices. This distinguished prelate has already resided above three weeks at my house, and is quite sensible of the services I have, during the whole of that time, rendered him."

Having fabricated this master-piece of rhetoric, he arrived about twilight near the Piazza Giudea, where he sold one of his old mantles to a certain jew, and with the proceeds of his ancient suit, purchased an embroidered shirt, which he threw over him without any further dress, the better to carry his design into execution. For had he ventured to make his appearance in his own coarse habiliments, the imposition would have been discovered in a moment. Now, however, he advanced with confidence,

as it was night, towards the residence of Luca; to whom, finding him at home, he delivered the letter. Luca had scarcely perused it, when the bishop began to tell a dreadful story of his having been set upon and robbed by banditti, who had slain his two servants, endeavouring to defend their master, while he had with difficulty escaped. His appearance, no less than the letter, certainly verified his assertion. Observing his forlorn condition, Luca, in a compassionate tone, addressed him: "My lord, your excellency is very welcome;" to which his reverence replied: "Do not, friend, give me any titles; but simply call me Cardinal; my name is Adriano:" imposing on the credulity of the saddler, that he was the cardinal of that name, who had travelled into Turkey. Reassured by the tone of the feigned cardinal, his host now lavished upon him every attention in his power, saying: "You do me honour, Cardinal, to take up your residence in my poor house, where you may rely upon us all as being wholly devoted to your service. Poor as it is, you must therefore consider my house as your own, and I am only concerned to think, that since the sack of this noble city, I do not find myself in circumstances to offer you a more splendid reception. But I trust my best efforts will not be wanting to supply those deficien-

cies, which I am aware your excellency must perceive, if your infinite goodness will deign, as my brother flatters me you will, to accept my attentions." His grace here returned his thanks in the most condescending manner, though he still sat with a somewhat serious and sombre countenance; on which Luca respectfully ventured to throw one of his best cloaks over his reverend shoulders, cherishing the vital warmth until such time as a hot supper and a warm chamber could be prepared for him. For this laudable purpose he gave up his own room, into which, when the cardinal had finished his supper, he was respectfully shown by the lady of the house herself. A bath was then ordered for the good cardinal's feet, with all kinds of sweet ointments and herbs, together with a flagon of Greek wine to invite him to repose.

The next morning our happy tradesman's first visit was to his tailor's, whom he took along with him to a draper's shop, where he purchased eight ells of fine cloth, part of which he paid for on the spot. A cassock and a large embroidered mantle were immediately presented to his reverence; and as his host imagined that his bed was not good enough for him, he ordered two new feather beds, with fine sheets and hangings, while his chamber was like-

wise elegantly furnished and fresh perfumed. His excellency was thus as greatly honoured as if he had been a real cardinal; his table was heaped with all those delicacies of the season, which only distinguished prelates have a right to eat, and for the first few days they were truly relished by his lordship; who made great havoc both among the solids and the sweets. Still his host imagined that something was wanting in the treatment due to his guest's singular magnificence and worth. He therefore summoned his friends and relatives, engaged in various trades, to assist him in his hospitable views; and the hosier, the tailor, and the shoemaker, were soon laid under contribution. He invited them to his house, saying: "Make haste, friends, make haste; the hour is come for pushing all our fortunes; we shall soon be the richest family in the place: no more stitching of bridles and saddles for me!" They inquired, in the greatest astonishment, what had happened; but the happy tradesman was so overpowered with joy at the reflection that he was the host of the lord bishop, that he only laughed and looked proudly round him, hardly deigning to reply. But on being pressed more closely, with an air of affected humility he observed: "Why, gentlemen, if you will have it, there is a very distinguished prelate re-

siding in my house at present; and I am very happy to see him, and always shall be: that is all. He is desirous of bestowing one of his benefices on a son of mine, and my brother also writes to me about it: indeed he introduced him to me. So confident did the poor tradesman appear, that all his relations agreed with him, and determined also, on their part, to show every kind of respect to the venerable prelate. More than a dozen of them assembled together, among whom was the host's sister-in-law, named Antonia; who on hearing of her brother's vast expectations, brought her son Giovanni with her, a youth who had been adopted into the family of Lattanzio, a Neapolitan, and treated as his own son. But his fond mother had now brighter prospects for him, and ordering him home, proceeded to offer his services to the cardinal, at whose feet she humbly knelt. The whole party, indeed, lavished upon him all those ceremonies and attentions due only to persons of the highest quality; and he was treated with beccaficos in season, and with every kind of poultry, game, pastry, and ragouts. Even the marmalade was of the finest, which appeared after dinner, and his tooth-pick is said to have been presented to him in a cover, accompanied with wines of the best and finest quality to be found in all the city of Rome.

It is likewise reported that the celebrated cook, in the service of the friars of Santa Matelica, was the very man who was sent for to prepare the bishop's meals, under the superintendence of Catella, the wife of our honest tradesman. Here then did the worthy prelate feast like a wolf in the sheep-fold, rejoicing the host and his good friends and family with his saintly and benignant looks. After spending a joyous time, he began to think, as he had long flattered the ambitious hopes of his host and his brother-in-law in vain, it would be well to follow up his plan with another master-stroke of his art: for in fact the wretched tradesman was now on the point of ruin. In order to drain his last resources, the cardinal began to feign himself sick, and fairly took to his bed for more than ten days, pretending at first to refuse all nourishment, though he yielded at the same time to his strong desire for drink. Feverish as he was, however, he contrived to devour as much as a man in health, obstinately refusing to see a physician, protesting that every thing was in the hands of God, and that in fact he was much better than he deserved to be. He was, in truth, afraid that if tried by the aphorisms of Hippocrates, the language of his pulse, with his voice and looks, might convict him of his foul deceit. Requesting therefore that a notary

might instantly be sent for, he showed an extreme desire to settle his last accounts, purposing to dispose of a vast property, which could be no loss to himself, in favor of his hospitable host and his friends. He provided for Marc Antonio, the son of Luca, the saddler, by a bequest of his rich bishopric of Montpelier in France; and to Gioanni, the son of the sister-in-law, he bequeathed the rectory of San Simpliciano, in the Cremonese. But to Luca, the saddler, himself, he left a thousand ducats, with only five hundred to his brother-in-law Bastiano; as he had to remember at the same time many of his surrounding friends, in different legacies, to be paid out of the proceeds of his benefices and other possessions, lying within the districts of Cremona and Piacenza. While he was thus pronouncing his last will and testament, with a feeble and trembling voice, his cardinal's cap being drawn quite over his eyes, and holding as it were his soul between his teeth, to keep it from taking wing, until he had settled his affairs: "I do not wish," he continued, "to abate a jot of the liberality which my great and magnanimous ancestors have always shown to their dying day; I would have you therefore, Mr. Notary, write down that I add to the former thousand, five hundred more ducats, in behalf of Signor Luca, the

saddler;" whose joy, and that of the whole family, on hearing his beneficent intentions, became quite inexpressible. The reverend father now thought fit to recover very rapidly, which convinced his new friends that he had an excellent constitution; and as the time was fast approaching when he intended to depart from Rome, accompanied by some of these simple people, into France, in order to confirm them in their credulity, he ordered a large house to be taken for him in Rome to receive him on his return. This was directly done, and very well furnished with all that was befitting a man of rank; being the next house to that which formerly belonged to Melchior Barlasina. The wife of Luca, in the idea that her son Marc Antonio would soon be made a bishop, a hat becoming such an office having been already, by the cardinal's advice, procured, presented four handsome rings, all she had in the world, to be worn by his reverence, as a slight token of her gratitude for his patronage of her son. Her sister Antonia likewise, in consideration of the rectory given to her boy Gioanni, presented him with four fine cambric shirts, and several pair of rich embroidered stockings. And though these were but insignificant proofs of their sense of the high worth and dignity of his excellency, he nevertheless deigned to accept

them, without the least symptom of pride or haughtiness. Nor was this the extent of the poor infatuated tradesman's folly; for just before the departure of his reverence, he sold a fine vine in his possession at San Bastiano, for two hundred ducats, though it was well worth three hundred, to show his gratitude for the cardinal's will.

But Providence, which soon or late is sure to bring the greatest iniquities to light, revealed, on this occasion, the daring imposition practised by this wretch, in the following manner. The sister-in-law of Luca had, as was before stated, recommended her son to the patronage of the mock cardinal, withdrawing him from the care of his former friend, who was much displeased at such a step, on account of the great pains which had been bestowed in his education. So far was he incensed by such ungrateful conduct, that he was resolved to obtain redress. He frequently sent to his mother, Antonia, to learn what had become of him, who, professing great sorrow at his absence, replied, that he had not lately called at her house. He then went in search of him, half afraid lest the soldiers, of which the place was full, had led him astray, as he was a tall and pleasing youth, well fitted to become one of their body. And it so happened that this youth, Gio-

anni, and his master, Lattanzio, encountered each other upon the bridge, as the boy was hastening to purchase fruits for the lord cardinal. Lattanzio immediately cried, "Come here, you little glutton! What are you doing? and why have you run away from me?" The boy replied, "Because my mother has found me a situation with a great lord, who is staying in the house of Luca, the saddler, near the palace of Sienna." His master then tried to persuade him to return home with him, when the youth took to his heels, and left him; on which Lattanzio immediately went in person to the house of Antonia, to upbraid her with her strange and ungrateful conduct. "You appeared to have been satisfied," he continued, "with the kindness I shewed your son, having treated him always as if he had been one of the family. And who is this person residing at present with your brother-in-law, who seems to have deprived me of the boy's affection? Let him be sent back to me instantly, for I am determined it shall be done."

Having no better excuse to make, the lady replied, that she knew nothing about the matter; and then turned her back upon him with an air of disdain, believing that Gioanni was secure of the cardinal's good graces, and that Lattanzio might easily provide himself with another apprentice. She expected too,

that her son would make her little presents out of the proceeds of his rectory, of such ornaments and dresses as would be very agreeable to her. Further incensed by this repulse, Lattanzio had recourse the same evening to the assistance of a magistrate, just as the impostor was preparing to set out from Rome with the tradesman and his associates. Without any knowledge of the real particulars, he stated, very truly, that there resided at the house of Luca, a man of extremely bad character, and one of the greatest cheats upon the face of the earth. In consequence of this timely representation, the police were ordered to pay a visit to the tradesman's house, where they found the cardinal on the point of setting out; four horses standing saddled at the door, the best of which was for the cardinal's own person, and the other three for his companions, who were now carried, with their patron, to the prison of Tor di Nona. Luca was first of all interrogated by the magistrate as to the business of the said impostor at his house, and whither they were going together? To this the poor tradesman replied, that his brother had written to him very fully from Naples, warmly recommending his lordship, whom had they better known, they would not, perhaps, have ventured to use so unceremoniously as they had done. The ma-

gistrate then commanded him to produce the letter, and detecting the forgery, from the affectation and bombast of its style, he ordered the cardinal to be put to the question, in order to obtain clear information as to his designs and character. Having an extreme aversion to the honour of martyrdom, and being an experienced old rogue, he instantly confessed the manner in which he had counterfeited the real letter, as well as the whole series of impostures he had since practised on this credulous family. He even developed his future plans of installing the son in his clerical office, of carrying them to visit his bishopric, through Montpelier, and into France, where he intended likewise to ordain Marc Antonio, flattering them with the hope of receiving immense fortunes, while they continued to lavish upon him the whole of their remaining substance; and as they journeyed from place to place, he intended to weave new plots to impose upon them and their companions.

On hearing this, the judge immediately ordered his poor victims to be liberated, first inquiring of them the particulars of the lord bishop's conduct when he arrived at their house; and he was shocked to hear how he had come among them quite destitute, the grave solemnity with which he had pre-

sented the letter, his continual feasting, the dignified importance with which he commanded their services, ordering his tooth-pick case to be brought in a cover; leaving his abode only in the morning and the evening under pretence of going to mass; and entreating his host to call him simply by the name of Adriano, meaning to represent himself as Cardinal Adriano, at that time leaving Rome. But when the narrator came to the story of the will, with all the items and particulars of his legacies, the judge and the whole court were convulsed with laughter. Then there was the cassock, the gold rings presented to him by the lady, the young cardinal's hat prepared for Marc Antonio, and the fine embroidered shirts, set down to the account of the young Gioanni's rectory. Most of the stolen goods were recovered, rather by good fortune than by any sort of prudence on the part of the family, his excellency not being now in a situation to lay his hands upon them, though they waited, ready packed at the door, to be transported to another country. The rings, however, were gone; and it was in vain that the poor lady urged her claims before the magistrate; the rogue, stedfast as a tower, denied all knowledge of them, and she was compelled to submit patiently to her fate, especially as the cardinal swore to it in so solemn a manner,

Having at length heard the whole cause, the judge pronounced his sentence, and the lord cardinal was condemned to have his ears cut off on the next Saturday morning, and to be well scourged; while Luca, the saddler, was sentenced to re-open his shop, and renew his labours on bridles and saddles; and his brother-in-law, Bastiano, the shoemaker, to return to his last. Lattanzio was directed to seize upon his apprentice, Gioanni; and Marc Antonio, as not yet being of an age to assume the duties of his bishopric, was compelled to wait until he should arrive at years of discretion.

NOVELLA III.

There resided not very long ago in Pavia one Messer Antonio de' Torelli, a fine old gentleman, who is still affectionately remembered by several of the more aged citizens of the place. When he began to feel himself gradually declining, some time before the termination of his mortal career, he resolved, out of regard to his three sons, whom he had already settled advantageously in life, to adjust his affairs for the last time, and distribute his property amongst them. Summoning them for this purpose to his presence, he said: "You see, my dear boys, I am beginning to grow old; am I not? At least I cannot hope to survive many years; and it will be a consolation, no less to you than to myself, while I am here, to put your affairs into a little better train. I intend to give you equal shares, inasmuch as you are entitled to them; and to do this now, instead of putting it off from day to day, until the very last moment." So he forthwith proceeded to give away both houses and lands, besides all his personal property, in equal shares, to his children, not sparing even the ready money in his bureau, consisting of six

thousand ducats, which he now divided amongst his sons, saying, "You will take notice, boys, that it is nothing but my affection for you, together with my old age, which begins to affect my judgment, that leads me to settle these matters at present. For I should be sorry to be like those avaricious old fathers who are so jealous of their authority, that the longer they live, the more they would have; ambitious of domineering and managing every thing their own way till the very last. They retain their hold upon the things of this world with as tenacious a grasp, as if they really never intended to relax it; and instead of giving themselves any repose, they labour still harder to accumulate treasures which they can never enjoy. Instead of imitating so foolish an example, I will relinquish my property and my cares with a good grace, and I will continue to live joyously among you, as long as heaven shall permit, feeling assured that you will all take pleasure in supplying me with more than I shall ever require."

His sons vied with each other in expressing their gratitude for his paternal goodness, declaring that they should merely consider themselves in the place of his stewards, ever prepared to attend to his minutest wishes, in every respect. Yet it so turned out, that in a very few months after the good old gen-

tleman had parted with his property, their demeanour towards him began to alter. And this he shortly perceived, when he began to take up his residence first with one, and then with another; believing that he could not fail to enjoy himself exceedingly. After continuing tolerably comfortable with them for a little while, he began to be aware, that in proportion as he lengthened his visits, they seemed to become less agreeable. This he more particularly noticed was the opinion of his three daughters-in-law, some of whom were not unfrequently heard to exclaim: "Look! look! here is that vexatious old man again, come to dine with us too, at such an inconvenient hour;" while others would say, "There is really no pleasing him; the soup is always seasoned either too high or too low; indeed he is getting very old, and very odd." So frequent and so loud did these murmurs at length become, that he could not avoid overhearing them; and even the servants soon convinced him of the error he had committed in enriching his children during his lifetime at his own expense. Not very well pleased at having made this discovery, he determined to apply, in order to relieve his anxiety, to Angelo Beccaria, one of his oldest friends, to whom, in a doleful voice, he said: "You are aware, my dear friend, that about six months ago, I got a foolish

notion into my head of making my will, which I still more foolishly executed in favour of my sons. Now, you would not believe, my dear Angelo, in what an ungrateful, in what a cruel way, they, and especially their wives, have since treated me. I thought that they would be a thousand times kinder to me than ever, after leaving them all I was worth during my lifetime, instead of making them wait till I was fairly gone. I imagined that they would all be attentive and obliging to me, and, would you believe it, it has turned out just the contrary. I wish, from my very soul, that I had retained my property, for my children, and especially their wives, look as if they could hardly bear the sight of me. Now I would not breathe a word of this to any one living but yourself. You were always kind to me, and it is a great relief to my feelings, to have some one, at least, in whom to confide." His friend, Angelo, endeavoured to console him, saying, that he was extremely sorry to hear of such unfilial conduct on the part of his children, when they ought rather to have shewn him increased tenderness and respect, after bestowing the whole of his fortune on them and their families. He then paused, as if considering what could possibly be done. After ruminating for some time, "I have it! I have it! my dear Antonio," he cried. "If you will

follow my advice, you may be a happy man yet. Now listen! Suppose I were to lend you two thousand ducats, which you shall take home with you immediately, and return them to me in a few days. You may shew them in the mean while to your sons, to convince them that they are in your possession, stating, that you mean to leave them to whomsoever you may judge proper. Their avarice will so far weigh with them, as to induce them to shew you that attention and dutiful behaviour, which all your kindness has failed to produce." Accepting the proposal, with his warmest thanks, Messer Antonio instantly received from his friend's hands the two thousand ducats, and having counted and given his note for them, he carried them joyfully along with him home.

In pursuance of his friend's advice, he then sent for Galeazzo, his eldest son, to whom he said: "You are aware, my son, that though I still may have many years to live, I not long since made over the greatest part of my property to you and your brothers, yet I did not dispose of the whole; for that would have been a foolish thing, indeed; though I only reserved a few thousands, not to leave myself quite destitute, as you may here behold." He then exhibited his friend's gold; giving his eldest son at the same time to understand, that should all continue

pleasant between them, he intended to add them to the sum he had before bestowed upon him.

Dismissing Galeazzo, he then went through the same scene with his two brothers, making the same promises to each. Nor was it long before he reaped the benefit of this happy expedient; as he had the pleasure of observing a great change for the better in the conduct of his children. On returning the money to his friend Angelo, he again expressed his gratitude for the ingenious suggestion, observing, that he had now nothing further to complain of, and that he was a very happy father, inasmuch as his sons already began to vie with each other in their kindness and attentions to him.

Not very long after, the old gentleman feeling himself beginning to decline apace, experienced the advantage of his good friend's advice; for no children could be more attentive to the least wants and wishes of a parent. However much pressed, he still delayed to make his final will; and not satisfied with this, he further resolved to reproach his children for their late conduct by another ingenious device. In the very same chest which had contained the six thousand ducats, he deposited a heap of sand, on the surface of which he laid an oaken staff, with an inscription, in very plain terms, to the following purport:

"I will and bequeath this cudgel to knock any

old fool upon the head, who gives away his own property during his lifetime."

In a few days afterwards, this kind old father breathed his last, when his sons severally hastened to inspect the strong box which he had previously shewn to each! and so eager and simultaneous were they in their motions, that they all three met together on the spot, where they stood gazing for some time wistfully at each other. The eldest first broke silence, saying, "It is now several months ago, since my father presented me with a bag of gold, containing, as he said, two thousand ducats, which he deposited here for me. I doubt not they are in this box, and I am now come here to claim them." At these words, his brothers, Antonio and Julio, each exclaimed, "It may be very true, Galeazzo, but he promised exactly the same sum to me." Each asked the others for the key, and maintaining the truth of their several assertions, they entered into a pretty sharp dispute. Weary at length of controversy, they became desirous of accommodating matters, and agreed, like good brothers, to share all the contents of the chest amongst them. Instantly sending for a locksmith, they ordered it to be broken open in their presence, when, instead of their bags of gold, they beheld it filled with sand,

and the cudgel, with the ingenious device, upon the top of it. Overwhelmed with shame and vexation, they in vain tried to laugh the matter off, and appear amused with this humorous sort of retaliation. No sooner did Messer Angelo hear of his old friend's improvement upon their original contrivance, than being highly entertained with it, he everywhere made it a source of general amusement among his acquaintance, frequently observing, "We foolish old fellows, you see, must take care of ourselves." And indeed it too often happens, that the sole reward we reap from the unremitted toil and exertions of a whole life spent in enriching our posterity, is disobedience and ingratitude, even while we are alive. We may well imagine, then, with how little ceremony they are inclined to treat our memories when we are gone.

Novels of Girolamo Parabosco.

GIROLAMO PARABOSCO.*

The novels of this author first appeared at Venice, in octavo, without date, and were afterwards reprinted in the years 1552 and 1558, at the same place. He was a native of Piacenza, where he distinguished himself as an excellent poet and musician, no less than as a novelist; though his title to originality in this last character is by no means well established. Too many of his stories have been borrowed from earlier novelists; and Boccaccio, Sacchetti, and Massuccio are, without the least acknowledgment, respectively laid under contribution. His work is preceded by an introductory eulogy on the city of Venice, where he appears, from descriptions of persons and of places, to have spent the chief portion of his time. Thus nearly the whole of the characters introduced in his *Diporti*, are Venetian gentlemen, and the retreat chosen for their narration, not far from Venice, with the occasion of their meeting, are all very minutely described. The party is supposed

* Diporti di M. Girolamo Parabosco. Vinegia, 1552.

to consist of seventeen persons, among whom are Pietro Aretino, Speron Sperone, Ercole Bentivoglio, Lambertino, &c., who finding from the appearance of the weather that there was little chance of enjoying themselves upon the water, agree, at the suggestion of Messer Badovaro, to leave their huts, erected for the convenience of angling on the water, and betake themselves to the still more innocent amusement of telling stories. This occupies three days of their *diporti*, or sports, as each of the party has to repeat a tale, amounting in the whole to seventeen. They are alternately of a grave and humorous cast, and are interspersed with reflections appropriate to each style, and songs to give a further relish to the whole. In this form they were first published at Venice. They are in general of a less exceptionable nature than the tales in the Decameron, though Pietro Aretino is supposed to have been present at their delivery, and furnishes one of the number. It is conjectured from what the author himself states in one of his letters, that this publication comprehended only a small part of what he had written, as he promises in a few days to give the remaining hundred.

GIROLAMO PARABOSCO.

FIRST DAY, NOVELLA VIII.

THERE once resided in the beautiful city of Brescia, a certain youth of the name of Tommaso de' Tommasi, sprung from one of the most wealthy and ancient families of that place; but unfortunately addicted to those pursuits into which high spirited and thoughtless young men are too apt to fall. Careless of the consequences which attend their dissipated and licentious course of life, they yield themselves up an easy prey to every variety of gambling, intrigue, and boon companionship, as if they were more desirous of lavishing their regards upon cut-throats, parasites, and buffoons, than upon men of worth. These reprobates, with false and adulatory arts, are incessantly on the watch to impose upon, and to ruin such credulous youths as listen to them; and when they once get their victims entangled in their snares, they prey upon the fortunes both of them and of their families, until scarcely a wreck is left. Such, unfortunately, were the companions of this easy but spirited youth, who in the course of four years dissi-

pated almost all his fortune; a little country-seat being the sole remaining property which he could call his own. It was situated in the vicinity of the city, on the declivity of one of those mild and pleasant hills, many of which are in the possession of different nobles, who have fixed upon them for the beauty of their site and views; and these charming residences, resembling little paradises of pleasure, rather than places of domestic abode; are called *Ronchi*. Out of all his noble villas and other houses, this then was the only little place now left him; and as it had been intended rather for a garden of delight, full of sweet fruits and flowers, than a source of profit in grain and wines, so it ill supplied its master's personal expenses, much less his usual establishment of hawks and dogs, buffoons and parasites, with other companions fully as expensive as these. Having become too late aware of the consequences of his conduct, he resolved, through fear of the disgrace he should incur in the eyes of all his friends, who too well knew the habits into which he had fallen, to abandon the birthplace of his ancestors altogether. With these views he determined to dispose of his little estate and a cottage adjoining, on the most advantageous terms he could obtain, without paying much regard to the honesty and propriety of his measures. Avoiding

any public notice, he contrived to give some individuals a knowledge of his intentions, requesting as a favour that each would have the goodness to say nothing to his friends on the subject; and in this way he soon received considerable deposits from a number of different individuals who were desirous of purchasing the residence, without saying a word to each other. Having thus amassed a large sum of money, he soon after availed himself of an opportunity of disposing of the property altogether, and obtaining its full value, in addition to the earnest-money which he had already received. But just as he was on the point of setting out with the proceeds in his hands, the whole transaction came to light, on which he was instantly seized and thrown into prison. His sole concern when he was there seemed to be, how he could possibly contrive to retain possession of his treasure, and obtain his liberty. For this purpose he sent in haste for his attorney, who had been the boon companion of his pleasures during his prosperity, and to him he communicated his views; though the man of law had expressed no little reluctance to attend, and to take his instructions on the subject, believing there was now an end to his client's business for ever. Having approached the prison gate, Tommaso very politely saluted him as for-

merly, on which the notary condoled with him, and inquired in what way he could be of service to him? "You know," replied Tommaso, "the liberal manner in which I have treated you, and all my other friends, as this very place can testify for me, being encaged here like a winged bird, as I am. But I shall not insist on the obligations I have laid you under, because I would willingly relieve you from their weight by begging you to take compassion on me, and assist me to procure my enlargement from this detestable spot. As you must know, at least as well as I do, what brought me here, I shall do much better than waste my time upon that subject, and shall, instead, inform you how I mean to get away, and keep possession of the proceeds of my house and farm, which, I will stay here till Doomsday sooner than render up. I think you are upon good terms with our Magnifico, the Podestà, no less on account of your social wit and humour, than of the services you rendered him while you were his agent in Venice. Now, what I wish you particularly to impress upon his magisterial mind, is, that I have altogether lost my wits, on finding that I have run through my fortune in so short a time, and in so very scandalous a manner: and indeed it is almost strange I have not. I shall take care on my side to be guilty of all kinds

of extravagant actions that may give probability to your story. And when you have carried me fairly through the difficulty, you will greatly oblige me by accepting of at least twenty-five gold ducats for your pains. Moreover, I shall be eternally indebted to you; and if I succeed by this contrivance in liberating myself from these gloomy walls without refunding my resources, I shall consider myself a great man yet. On thee, then, and on thee, only, my friend, is my dependence, and trust me that my enlargement will be a work worthy of thy trouble.

The wary notary, one of those who possess the cunning of the serpent, without the innocence of the dove, sensible of his influence with the magistrate, and tempted by the amount of the proposed fee, gave the prisoner his hand, promising to make the most strenuous exertions to bring his friend Tommaso out of durance, without insisting upon more than five and twenty ducats. Apprehensive lest the prisoner should overact his part in the mad character which he intended to assume, the attorney suggested that he should make no other reply to all the questions which might be put to him, than by a single ludicrous gesture; and, repeating his injunction to this effect, he left him to adjourn to the residence of the magistrate. Being upon the pleasantest terms, he

immediately entered upon a variety of amusing topics, when there suddenly appeared one of the unlucky personages, whom Tommaso had imposed upon, appealing vehemently to the magistrate for redress, and demanding the restitution of his money. To him the attorney, in the gentlest possible tone, replied, turning at the same time towards his friend the Podestà: "What? is the gentleman so unfortunate, then, as to have dealings with that madman?" "Madman! what is it you talk of?" returned the creditor, "I wish he were no more wicked than he is mad." "Alas, I fear, whatever may be your opinion," said the attorney, in the calmest voice, "that he will turn out a mere idiot, and one that ought to be confined. I imagine that his unfortunate circumstances have driven him altogether out of his senses. Could I suppose, for a moment, that our Magnifico here was acquainted with his real state, I should express my surprise that he has committed to custody for debt, a mere fool, such as this poor wretch is. I am very apprehensive, that should he really have robbed any one, or been entrusted with money, he may have thrown it into the first ditch he came near, or scattered it on the public highway." The gentleman, however, advanced arguments to prove the perfect sanity of the prisoner, and indeed that he had proved

somewhat too acute; but these were so well rebutted by the evidence of the lawyer, that the magistrate, giving credit to it, ordered the accused to appear, by way of ascertaining the truth. Signor Tommaso was then brought forward, having already made a strange metamorphosis in his appearance by tearing his clothes to pieces, and being interrogated on the subject nearest his creditor's heart, gave only the manifest signs of folly recommended by his legal adviser. In a short time the rest of his creditors appeared, and bringing the same charges upon the very same grounds, and obtaining only a repetition of his antics, the Podestà, to try his sincerity, immediately ordered him to be put to the question, which however only elicited symptoms of fear and folly, such as he shewed before the application was made. He would, in fact, almost have endured to be torn limb from limb, rather than separated from his money. All other means adopted to obtain some kind of information from him turned out equally fruitless, and the Podestà was at length compelled by the representations of the notary, who carried the whole affair through with great skill, to sign an order for the release of his mad client, without paying any thing whatever. The attorney, calling on his client the next day for the stated sum, was surprised to find he

could get no other answer from him, than that which he had himself taught him. By all his entreaties for the five and twenty ducats, he obtained nothing but the same gestures, which had sufficed to exonerate him from the rest of his creditors; and the deceiver for once fell into his own trap. As he could not venture to reveal the affair, he was obliged to take the whole patiently, and of the two he was certainly the more deserving of punishment.

SECOND DAY, NOVELLA XIV.

There formerly resided in the rich and beautiful city of Bologna, a brave and intelligent youth of the name of Faustino, whose birth and accomplishments entitled him to rank among the noblest and proudest of the place. To these gifts of nature and of fortune was added a susceptible heart; and he soon became deeply enamoured of a young lady of exquisite beauty, whose name was Eugenia, and who in a short r[illegible]ed inclined to return his passion with equal [illegible]s and truth. Such was her lover's extreme lesir[illegible] beholding her, that he availed himself of [illegible]pportunity, and encountered every risk, to enjoy her society; frequently being in wait for hours to catch a mere glimpse of her, and employing numberless emissaries to instruct him as to her motions. Though the young lady's parents had been unable to extort any confession of her attachment from her own lips, they were at no loss to perceive it, and endeavoured to obviate the danger to be apprehended from its indulgence, believing that the young lover, on account of his superior rank and fortune, entertained no serious intentions of making her his wife.

With this view, they kept a very strict watch over their daughter, debarring her from the visits, and even from the sight of Faustino, as much as they possibly could. Yet her mother, being of a religious turn of mind, was unwilling that she should relinquish her usual attendance on divine worship, and herself accompanied her daughter every morning to hear mass at a church near their own house, but at so very early an hour, that not even the artisans of the city, much less the young gentry of the place, were stirring. And there she heard service performed by a priest expressly on her own account; though several other persons might happen to be present, who were in the habit of very early rising.

Now among these was a certain corn-merchant, who had been established only for a short time in Bologna. His name was Ser Nastagio de' Rodiotti, a man who had driven many a hard bargain, and thriven wonderfully in his trade; but of so devout a turn withal, that he would not, for the world, have made an usurious contract, or even speculated to any extent, without having first punctually attended mass; believing doubtless that so good an example more than counterbalanced, in the eye of heaven, the evil consequences of his actions. And these were certainly very great, especially in the way of raising

the price of bread, by his vast monopoly of that necessary article of life. Such, however, was his exemplary conduct in attending church, that he lost not a single opportunity of showing himself there, among the earliest of the congregation: having afterwards the consolation to reflect that he had discharged all his religious duties, and was ready for business, before a great portion of his fellow-citizens were stirring.

Now in a short time it also reached the ears of Faustino, through the good offices, it is supposed, of the young lady, that high mass was to be heard every morning at a certain church, with every particular relating to the devotees who attended, and the nearest way thither. Rejoiced at this news, her lover now resolved to rise somewhat earlier than he had been accustomed to do, that he might avail himself of the same advantage that the lady enjoyed, in beginning the day with religious duties. For this purpose he assumed a different dress, the better to deceive the eyes of her careful mother; being perfectly aware that she merely made her appearance thus early with her daughter, for the sake of concealing her from his sight. In this way the young lady had the merit of bringing Faustino to church, where they had the pleasure of gazing at each other with

the utmost devotion; except indeed when the unlucky tradesman, whom we have just mentioned, happened to place himself, as was frequently the case, exactly in their way, so as to intercept the silent communion of souls. And this he did in so vexatious a manner, that they could scarcely observe each other for a moment, without exposing themselves to his searching eye and keen observation. Greatly displeased at this kind of inquisition into his looks and motions, the lover frequently wished the devout corn-dealer in Purgatory, or that he would at least offer up his prayers in another church. Such an antipathy did he at length conceive to Ser Nastagio, that he resolved to employ his utmost efforts to prevail upon him to withdraw himself from that spot. Revolving in his mind a great variety of plans, he at last hit upon one, which he believed could not fail to succeed, and in a manner equally safe and amusing. With this view he hastened, without delay, to the officiating priest, whom he addressed in the following pious and charitable strain: "It has ever been esteemed, my good Messer Pastore, a most heavenly and laudable disposition, to devote ourselves to the relief of our poorer brethren. And this you doubtless know far better than I can inform you, from the fact of our blessed Saviour having

actually appeared on earth to redeem us from our sins. But though every species of charity is highly commendable, that which seeks out its objects without waiting to be solicited, far transcends the rest. For there are many, who however destitute, feel ashamed to come forward for the purpose of begging alms. Now I think, my worthy pastor, that I have of late observed one of these deserving objects in a person who frequents your church. He was formerly a jew, but through the mercy of heaven, which never ceases, not long ago he became a Christian, and one whose exemplary life and conduct render him in all respects worthy of the name. Yet on the other hand, there is not a more destitute being on the face of the earth, while such is his modesty, that I assure you I have frequently had the utmost difficulty in persuading him to accept of alms. It would really be a very meritorious act, worthy of the excellent character I have heard of you, were you to touch some morning upon his cruel misfortunes, relating his conversion to our faith, and the singular modesty with which he attempts to conceal his wants. This would probably procure for him a handsome contribution; and if you will only have the kindness to apprize me of the day, I will take care to bring a number of my friends along with me, and we shall

be sure to find this poor fellow seated in your church, where I know he is often employed in listening gratefully to your spiritual advice and consolation."

Our kind-hearted priest, unlike some of his brethren, who are too apt to appropriate the alms of the poor to themselves, making a traffic of the divine mercy of their Redeemer, impelled only by pure zeal and charity, cheerfully complied with the wily lover's request. He proposed then, as the most favourable occasion, the next Sunday morning, when a large assemblage of people would be present; regretting that he had not been sooner made acquainted with the affair. Faustino next gave the priest an accurate description of the features, person, and dress of our unfortunate corn-merchant, observing, that the poor man always appeared neat and clean, so that he could not possibly mistake him. Then taking leave of the good friar, he hastened to communicate this piece of mischief to some of his youthful companions, all of whom now awaited with great impatience for the approaching Sunday. Punctually, on its arrival, were they found assembled at the church, even early enough to hear the first mass, and there Messer Nastagio was seen stationed at his usual post, surrounded by a crowd of people, collected for the purpose of witnessing the consecration of the place. Af-

ter going through the Evangelists and the Creed, and muttering a few aves, the good priest paused and looked about him; then wiping his forehead, and taking breath for a while, he again addressed the congregation, opening his subject as follows: "Dearly beloved brethren, you must be aware, for our Saviour himself has enlightened you on that head, and I have myself likewise insisted upon it as well as I could; you must be aware, I say, that the most pleasing thing you can do in the eyes of the Lord, is to shew your charity towards poorer Christians, loving and assisting them according to their wants, as far as lies in your power. I trust, therefore, I shall not have much difficulty in persuading you to shew the fruits of this good seed of charity in the manner I desire. For as I know you are not wanting in charity, but rather abounding in good works, I am not afraid to inform you that there is a most deserving, yet destitute, object before you, who, though too modest to urge your compassion, is in every way worthy of it. Pray take pity upon him; I commend him to your kindness. Behold him," he cried, pointing full at Ser Nastagio; "Lo, thou art the man. Yes;" he continued, while the corn-merchant stared at him in the utmost astonishment, "yes, thou art the man! Thy modesty shall no longer conceal thee

from the eyes of the people, which are now fixed upon thee. For though thou wert once an Israelite, my friend, thou art now one of the lost sheep which are found, and if thou hast not much temporal, thou hast a hoard of eternal wealth." He addressed himself, during the whole of this time, both by words and signs, to Ser Nastagio, yet the poor merchant could by no means persuade himself, against the evidence of his own reason, that he was the individual pointed out. Without stirring, therefore, from the spot, he, somewhat reluctantly, put his hand into his pocket, so far conquering his avarice as to prepare to bestow his alms in the same manner as the rest of the congregation. The first person to present his contribution was the author of the trick, who approaching the spot where the merchant stood, offered his alms, and in spite of Ser Nastagio, dropped them into his hat, making a sign to the people expressive of his admiration at the poor man's modesty. And though the incensed tradesman exclaimed in an angry tone to the young lover: "I have a longer purse than thou hast ears, man!" it availed him nothing. The good priest pursued his theme without noticing Ser Nastagio's remark, except by saying, "Give no credit to his words, good people, but give him alms, give him alms; it is his modest merit which prevents

him from accepting them. Yes, go, thrust them into the good man's pockets; fill his hat, his shoes, his clothes, with them, and make him bear away with him the good fruits of your charity." Then once more directing his attention to the confused and angry merchant, he exclaimed: "Do not look thus ashamed, but take them, take them; for believe me, good friend, many greater and better men have been reduced to the same piteous plight, yea, even worse than that you are now in. You should rather then consider it as an honour than otherwise, inasmuch as your necessities have not been the consequence of your own misconduct, but solely arise from your embracing the light of truth, and becoming a disciple of our Lord."

The priest had no sooner ended, than there was a general rush of the whole congregation towards the place where the astonished merchant stood, endeavouring who should be the first to deposit their donations in his hands, while he in vain attempted to resist the tide of charitable contributions which now poured in upon him on every side. He had likewise to struggle against his own avarice, no less than against the officious donors of alms, for he would willingly have received the money, though he did all in his power to repulse their offers. When the tu-

mult had at length a little subsided, the incensed merchant began to attack the priest in the most virulent terms, until the preacher was almost inclined to suspect that he must really, in some way, have been misinformed as to the proper object of his charity. He then began to make his excuses, as well as he could, for the error into which he had fallen; but the lover's purpose was accomplished, and the deed could not be recalled. For it was soon reported that Ser Nastagio, the corn-merchant, had that very morning been recommended to the charitable notice of the congregation, as an example of true conversion from the Jewish to the Christian creed. This story was quickly circulated throughout the whole city, to the infinite amusement of all its inhabitants, more especially of the young lovers, who had now full leisure once more to contemplate each other's perfections, free from the observation of Ser Nastagio, who was never known to enter that church again.

Marco Cademosto da Lodi.

MARCO CADEMOSTO DA LODI.*

THE particulars relating to the life and character of this novelist, at all interesting or deserving to be known, are few. He held an ecclesiastical office at the Roman court, where he is said to have enjoyed the patronage and affection of Leo X.; but several of his sonnets, addressed to that Pope, shew that he was by no means satisfied with the share assigned to him of the pontifical favours. In addition to his claims as a novelist, he acquired the reputation of a tolerable poet; but in neither of these branches is he so highly estimated as many of his contemporaries. His poems, and his novels to the number of seven, appeared together at Rome in 1544, dedicated to the Cardinal Ippolito d'Este. The remainder of his works was destroyed, according to the author's account, during the great sack of Rome. One of the best of his stories, in the opinion of Mr. Dunlop, and which will be found in the following pages, is

* Sonetti ed altre Rime con proposte e risposte di alcuni uomini degni, e con alcune Novelle, Capitoli, e Stanze: in Roma, per Antonio Blado Asolano.

that of an old man, who by his will, leaves his whole fortune to hospitals, to the detriment of his own family; but the latter contrive to recover the property at the ingenious suggestion of their father's steward. Lodi was neither a very abundant nor a very excellent writer; and perhaps the mediocrity of his genius may account for the little encouragement which he met with at the court of so munificent a pontiff as Leo, of whose treatment he speaks in no very guarded terms.

The chief merit of Lodi will be found to resolve itself into his skilful manner of modifying or enlarging the stories furnished by his predecessors, like too many of the novelists of the sixteenth century, who not unfrequently appropriated whole tales as their own. Yet were we to give credit to their repeated asseverations, we are bound to believe that the great bulk of their productions was not merely original, but founded upon real incidents, thrown into a fictitious dress. In this, with too little reason, they are supported by many of the critics of their own country, who argue from the slight circumstances of a few real names and facts, that the stories themselves are true.

MARCO CADEMOSTO DA LODI.

THERE dwelt in Padua, not very long ago, a gentleman of the name of Scipione Sanguinaccio, whose extreme avarice, to which he had devoted a whole life of wretchedness, rendered him notorious throughout the city, as one of the most penurious of its usurers. It had always been the height of his ambition to grow richer and richer, by the accumulation of interest upon interest, until he should have attained to an extreme old age. This being at length the case, he grew very infirm, and began to turn his thoughts, however reluctantly, to the propriety of making his last will and testament. By recent reflections on the subject, he had become so deeply sensible of his numberless offences against heaven, that desirous of lessening the amount of these his manifold sins and transgressions, he determined to leave the bulk of his property for the endowment of monasteries and hospitals, to the no small injury of two sons, whose interests he believed to be very properly sacrificed, in order to insure the safety of his own soul. The young men, however, hearing of this

disposition of his affairs, were by no means of their father's opinion, lamenting to each other that he should have imbibed those foolish fears and prejudices, which had led to so disagreeable a result. The old gentleman, on his part, imagined that his sons were not duly sensible of the high importance which ought now to be attached to his eternal interests. Such became the anxiety of the young men on this head, that they agreed to consult some of their most intimate friends, entreating them to employ their influence with their father, in order to obtain a more equitable adjustment of his affairs; and to save his family from being consigned to poverty and shame for the sake of others. "Pray, remind him," they said, "that true charity begins at home, among our kindred and friends; and do not spare his conscience on the subject." But these arguments, so far from prevailing with their aged father, led him only to adhere still more pertinaciously to his own opinion; and had he lived much longer, he would infallibly have deprived them of the little already provided for them: being resolutely bent upon blotting out his transgressions, as far as money could cancel them, in which laudable intention he vowed he would die. Now it so happened, that immediately before his decease, this unjust disposition

of his property came to the ears of one of his old stewards, who immediately hastened to condole with the sons on this melancholy occasion. "Ah, my dear young masters!" he cried, "good Messer Angelo and good Messer Alberto, I truly sympathize with you both. When I heard that my old master had been guilty of making so unreasonable a will, I cannot express the grief and concern which I felt for your sakes. Indeed I have thought of nothing else since I heard of it, and I think I have formed a plan which will set all to rights yet, if you will be guided by me. For his money shall go the way it ought to do, so help me God, whatever may happen to his soul; and I will tell you how we can contrive it. I think he cannot possibly live through the night, so that we must keep the house as quiet as we can, and close the doors against all impertinent intruders, who would only disturb him in his last moments. When your poor father has breathed his last, we must carry his body decently and quietly into another room; which being done, out of mere regard for you, I will take his place on the sick bed where he made his first wicked will. Now, before it becomes known that your dear father has departed, you must both come to my bedside weeping, and praying that God would please to restore your parent,

and to remove his dangerous distemper, to the end that it may appear as if he were still alive. Then lose no time in sending early the next morning for the same attorney who was before employed, and I will make another will for you much more equitable and better to your liking."

On hearing these consolatory words, the young men were not a little comforted, and expressed their gratitude for such wise and humane counsel. "We always," said the eldest, "believed you to be very kindly inclined towards us, and we know, my good Galeazzo, that your kindness is equalled by your prudence and discretion. Should the plan you propose turn out as advantageous for us, as you seem to think, you may depend upon our lasting gratitude, and you shall certainly reap your share of the fruits of it."—Much more conversation passed between them to the same effect; and not long after the old gentleman expired. His body was then, in execution of their plan, removed into another chamber, while the wily old steward soon after assumed his master's place; the curtains being drawn close around him, and the sick man's nightcap put upon his head. A dim taper was burning by his side, and every thing was arranged in such a way as almost to bid defiance to detection. The attorney and witnesses now ar-

rived, when Galeazzo, with his head half enveloped in the bed-clothes, attempted to address the man of law in a feeble tone of voice: "I have been thinking a great deal since yesterday, Messer Pietro, about many particulars in the late will you drew. And alas, I fear, I was about to act very unjustly towards my poor boys, not having that inward reliance upon heaven, which all good Christians ought to have. But I thank God, that I have been permitted to think better of it; and it does not appear to me, that, by depriving my own children of their lawful inheritance for the sake of others, I can possibly recommend myself to the mercy of heaven. Proceed therefore, good Messer Pietro, while there is yet time. I will cancel my former hard and unnatural bequests. Let my poor boys have something to shield them from a pitiless world; let them inherit what I toiled to obtain for them. Indite it as my will that they succeed to the whole of my property, as well real as personal, chargeable only with the following legacy. I bequeath to my tried and faithful old servant, Galeazzo, in return for his long and valued services, the sum of two thousand ducats, one half of which shall be payable at Christmas, the other half on Easter day." At these words the two sons, not in the least expecting such a stratagem, on

the part of their old friend, came forward somewhat hastily, saying, as they approached the bed:—"But, dear father, as we shall have pleasure in attending to this or any other little commissions which you may mention to us, say no more; you will exert yourself too much." "What is that you say?" inquired the patient in an angry tone. "Only," replied they, "that we would wish you to dispose of your whole property as you judge best: but, dear father, we would just suggest, that, however meritorious the services of Galeazzo may have been, so large a sum is perhaps beyond either his wishes or his deserts." "I cannot think so," replied their false father, still in an offended tone; "I cannot think so, sons. He has been a faithful servant of mine for more than four-and-twenty years; I cannot do too much for him!" "Still, dear father," they repeated, "we think you are giving him too much!" To which Galeazzo, quite out of patience, replied in great anger, "You had better take care what you are about, and not provoke me too far, for if you do, I will get up, weak as I am, and give you reason to repent of your behaviour." Alarmed lest their false father should really put his threat into execution, the brothers remained silent, while the notary proceeded to state the sum at two thousand ducats;

after which the will was regularly signed and sealed, and the witnesses were dismissed. The party being left together, the avaricious brothers could not conceal their dissatisfaction, and began to upbraid the cunning steward for having inserted his own name in the will. "You have greatly deceived us," they continued; "we could not have imagined that you would have been guilty of such a trick, and have turned the affair in this way to your own advantage, inserting your own name in the will, just as if you had been one of our brothers. Why did you not rely on our promise, that we would reward you handsomely, instead of assuming so much authority, and dictating to us as you did? But it is done, and there is no helping it now; I suppose you must have your money; but you have certainly not behaved well."

Astonished at such ingratitude on the part of the brothers, Messer Galeazzo, turning very sharply round upon them, replied: "Are not you ashamed, Messer Angelo and Messer Alberto, to address me in language like this? What might I have expected, then, had I trusted to your promises? You complain that I have inserted my own name, as if instead of a servant, I had been your own brother; to which I reply, that I have treated you not only like a brother,

but like a father. I have bestowed upon you a fortune of twelve thousand ducats, reserving only for myself the modest sum of two thousand. It is merely what I deserve in return for the infinite obligations I have now laid you under, without taking into consideration my long and faithful stewardship. After such usage I can no longer think of remaining in your service; and it is well that your kind father has so handsomely provided for me in his will, which you will be pleased to attend to at the appointed time. There is one piece of advice, also, which I beg leave to offer to you, no less for your own sakes than for mine. Never let a single syllable transpire of what has passed between us, in regard to your dear father's will, and I assure you it will never be divulged by me." Compelled to promise payment at the stipulated time, the brothers with a very ill grace dismissed the steward, who took his leave of them, bowing very formally, and returning them many ironical thanks.

Novels of Giovambattista Giraldi Cinthio.

GIOVAMBATTISTA GIRALDI CINTHIO.*

GIOVAMBATTISTA GIRALDI CINTHIO, the author of the *Hecatomithi,* one of the most voluminous novelists of the sixteenth century, rendered himself extremely popular among his own countrymen, by the vivid and daring character of his writings. His praises were celebrated by nearly all the contemporary wits and scholars of the period in which he lived. He was of noble lineage, and was born at Ferrara, early in the sixteenth century, and flourished during the sway of Ercole da Este II., duke of Ferrara, in whose service he filled the office of secretary. His death occurred in the year 1573.†

* Hecatomithi, overo cento Novelle di Giraldi Cinthio. Monteregale, 1565. First edition.

† Many interesting remarks on Cinthio, and on the literary controversies in which he was engaged, are contained in Barotti's Defence of the Ferrarese Authors against the Censures of Fontanini.

The *Hecatomithi*, or Hundred Fables, were first published in 1565, and consisted, notwithstanding their title, of only seventy stories, a contradiction noticed by his friend Piccolomini in a letter to the author, prefixed to the *Hecatomithi*, and dated the 12th of January, 1563; in which he says: "I assure you it is long since I have had the pleasure of perusing any work so entertaining as yours. But I cannot conceive your reason for entitling it *Hecatomithi*, when it contains no more than seventy novels." From this it might be inferred that the author postponed his further prosecution of the task, until he was far advanced in life, the letter in question being dated 1563, just ten years previous to his decease; a sufficient length of time for the composition of the additional number of novels. In a poetical introduction to his work, Cinthio, however, asserts that the entire series was the production of his youth, though he does not state his reasons for holding so great a proportion of them in reserve, while he put the others forth with a title so little adapted to them. On this subject he has the following lines, alluding to their early composition:

"Poscia ch' a te, lavor de' miei primi anni,
Accio c' habbia nel duol qualche ristoro,
Mi chiaman nell' età grave gli affanni," &c.

"Since now the griefs of eld my thoughts recal
To the fond labors of my boyish years,
Cheating the heavy hours of half their pain." &c.

And further on:

"Dunque se stata sei gran tempo occolta,
O de' miei giovenili anni fatica,
In cui studio già posi, e cura molta."

———"Young tasks, long time neglected,
Yet treasured up, that cost me many a sigh,
And many an anxious thought in times gone by."

The *Hecatomithi* of Cinthio is divided into two parts, each containing five decades, composed of ten novels each; under which arrangement, the number ought to amount exactly to the *Hecatomithi*, or Hundred Stories. This title, however, is scarcely yet applicable to the work, inasmuch as, with the ten introductory novels prefixed to the first decade, it will be found to contain so many beyond what it really imports. The occasion of the production of his novels, is referred by their author to the famous sack of Rome, and to the consequent pestilence which occurred soon after the storming of the city. In imitation, then, of Boccaccio, Cinthio feigns that a party of ladies and gentlemen, seeking refuge from the contagion, and from the horrors around them, set

sail for Marseilles, and beguile the irksomeness of their voyage with the relation of tales either of terror or of humour.

Cinthio appears, in many respects, to have had Boccaccio in view, as well in the subject as in the disposition and manner of his work. In the tales themselves, however, there is but little resemblance to his model: the imaginative portion is less pleasing, and the incidents are often improbable and revolting. The style is likewise laboured and involved to a degree of painful care and fastidiousness, while it is still inferior to that of earlier authors in point of purity and correctness. But with all his errors, he is a fine and powerful writer; and with the terrific subjects he has chosen, the strong dramatic interest which he contrives to awaken, and the energy and passion thrown into his narratives, he is perhaps of all novelists, the best calculated to rouse the sympathies, and attract the admiration of his countrymen. Some injudicious admirers, indeed, have on this account, presumed to place him above his celebrated predecessor; not scrupling to assert that he is, in no way, inferior to the great Boccaccio. Yet it is his faults, his daring and extravagant genius, which have given rise, in some degree, to this blind partiality; a partiality which can only be accounted for

by the violent and often ferocious character of the times in which he wrote. Thus his tragic stories are all of a dark and terrific description, abounding in extravagance and atrocities: on which the author's imagination seems to delight to dwell, until, like some great enchanter, he has spell-bound the faculties of his readers. He appears to have exhausted the catalogue of human crimes, and to have ransacked every country and every age, sparing neither classic nor romantic traditions, for subjects which he might dissect and display to the world, in all their horrible minuteness.

The introduction, consisting of ten stories, professes to hold forth the happiness of connubial love, and the fatal effects of illicit intercourse. The first decade is composed of Miscellaneous Stories. 2nd. Histories of attachments formed in opposition to the will of relatives and superiors. 3rd. Of the infidelity of wives and husbands. 4th. Of those who, by laying snares for others, accomplish their own ruin. 5th. Examples of connubial fidelity in trying circumstances. 6th. Acts of generosity and courtesy. 7th. *Bon mots* and sayings. 8. Examples of ingratitude. 9th. Remarkable vicissitudes of fortune. 10th. Acts of chivalry.

Of the stories which are of his own invention, the

second tale of the second decade is that of Orbecche, daughter of Sulmone, king of Persia, who refusing the hand of the prince of Parthia, unites her fate with that of Orontes, an Armenian, with whom she flies from her father's court, and undergoes a variety of sufferings. From its wild and extravagant character it was long a favourite story with the Italians, and enjoyed a reputation far beyond its merits; many dramas and other pieces being founded upon it, both in Italy and elsewhere. One of these, from the pen of the novelist himself, who dramatised many of his own stories, is very highly esteemed in Italy.

The seventh story of the third decade of Cinthio, is deserving of more particular notice, as having furnished Shakspeare with the incidents of his celebrated tragedy of Othello. A few of the more striking coincidences and variations in the two productions will here be pointed out, in which Shakspeare has generally improved upon the novelist. In the drama Iago is actuated to revenge by jealousy and resentment arising from Cassio's promotion, while in the novel he is merely influenced by love turned into hatred. In Shakspeare, the villain employs his wife to steal the handkerchief, but in the Italian this deed is performed by himself. The noble character of Othello is also wholly of the

poet's creation, he being drawn by the novelist with the vulgar features of a morose, selfish, and cruel husband. Much of the conclusion is equally the poet's own; and he has throughout displayed far more brilliancy of fancy and of language. In some instances Shakspeare has rendered the story more probable, tempered its ferocious character, and, by throwing into it the fascination of poetry, sentiment, and passion, has invested it with new dignity and with a new life. Thus in the Italian the Moor is assisted by his Ancient in the murder of Desdemona, yet he has afterwards the temerity to provoke and to dismiss him, which leads to the discovery of the crime, absurdities not adopted in the English drama. In the original the assassins pull down part of the house, in order that it may be supposed that the lady has been buried in its ruins. Iago's treachery is likewise attributed to Desdemona's rejection of his passion, in consequence of which he resolves to compass the destruction of both her and Cassio, whom he believes to be the favoured lover. In the Italian he confirms the suspicions of Othello by shewing him the handkerchief in the hands of a woman in the lieutenant's house. He then informs against him in the sequel, and Othello, according to the usual prac-

tice, is put to the torture, though without deigning to make any confession. He is subsequently banished, and assassinated by some of Desdemona's relations in his retreat.

In his deviations from his model, it will be seen, Shakspeare has for the most part improved upon the incidents; although he has in general adhered as closely to the facts as the nature of the respective productions would admit. Several of the characters bear the strongest resemblance to those in the novel, more particularly those of Desdemona, of Cassio, and of the arch traitor himself. The gradual and artful method pursued by Iago, of infusing suspicions, like a slow poison, into the noble nature of Othello, is closely copied from the novelist. This is calculated, to a certain degree, to diminish our admiration of the consummate skill with which the dramatist was supposed to have wrought up and unfolded the whole train of mischief. In drawing his character, too, of the consummate villain, he has adhered, with few traits of difference, to the Italian author; so that in his Othello, as in most of the dramas founded upon Italian subjects, the supreme merit of Shakspeare will be found in the magic of his language and versification, in the playfulness and vividness of his

fancy, in the truth and beauty of his sentiment; and above all in that fascinating power which he never fails to exercise over the human passions.

The fifth novel of the eighth decade suggested to Shakspeare the comedy of Measure for Measure; of which, however, the immediate original was Whetstone's play of Promos and Cassandra. But on both of these Shakspeare has greatly improved.*

Of the several editions of the Hecatomithi, the first appeared at Monteregale, in Sicily, in two volumes 8vo. 1565; the next at Venice, in 1566; followed by a third, at the same place, 1574.

* History of Fiction, vol. ii. p. 428.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL.

GIOVAMBATTISTA GIRALDI CINTHIO.

FIRST DECADE, NOVELLA VIII.

Niccolo da Este, the second of that name among the sovereigns of Ferrara, his uncle, who was distinguished as Niccolo Zoppo, having before him borne that name, had a numerous progeny of sons by different women to whom he had been attached. Two of these, on whom he had always lavished the fondest proofs of regard, traced their origin to the same mother: their names were Leonello and Borso. When advanced in years, Niccolo married Ricciarda, daughter of Aloise, marquis of Salucio, who bore him two sons, in addition to his other family; the first of whom he called Ercole, the second Gismondo, after the emperor of that name, who had stood sponsor for him, while he resided about the period of his birth in Ferrara. Both these children were left, after the duke's death, to the guardianship of their half-brother Leonello; who, incited by lust of power, soon usurped the dominions which of right belonged to the legitimate son.

In order more securely to enjoy the fruits of his

treachery, he sent his two half-brothers, still very young, to the court of the king of Naples. He then formed an union with a daughter of one of the lords of Mantua, by whom he had a son, called after his grandfather Niccolo da Este. But it was the will of Providence, that in the same manner as the usurper's father had left his infant sons Ercole and Gismondo to his care, he himself, dying soon after, was also compelled to leave his own son Niccolo, yet an infant, to the protection of his brother Borso, the first of this ancient and illustrious family who adopted the title of duke; and who had always been permitted to look forward to the possession of the government, on condition of afterwards leaving it to his young ward Niccolo, whom he brought up in the noblest manner.

The two brothers, whom the deceased Leonello had banished to the court of Naples, during this time, already began to evince numerous proofs both of talent and courage, by no means unworthy of their princely descent. The time which the young Niccolo devoted to abandoned pleasures, was by them spent in military exercises, and other laudable pursuits, most honorable to the character of noble cavaliers. Nor was Borso altogether insensible to their merits. Hearing of their high reputation, he invited the two brothers to return to the court of Fer-

rara, offering to Ercole the government of Modena, and to Gismondo that of Reggio, still retaining Niccolo at his own court, with the intention of discharging the high trust reposed in him by his brother, by leaving him at his own death the title of lord of Ferrara. The king of Naples, who did not duly appreciate the merit of Ercole, dismissed him from his service, while the latter was instigated by Borso to resent this conduct. Meeting each other soon after in battle, the king assaulting Ercole, was not only driven back by him, but lost part of his royal mantle, which was torn from his shoulders in the contest. Incensed at this indignity, he vowed deadly revenge against its author, and sought by every means in his power to accomplish his ruin. Having adopted a variety of schemes, all of which proved abortive, he resolved, as a last resource, to employ every art of deceit, before he abandoned his design. With this view he despatched some trusty messengers to Ercole, with an offer to assist him in expelling Borso from his dominions, in order to recover the rightful heritage of his ancestors. Ercole, aware of his views, replied to this embassy, that he could in no way proceed in the attempt, unless he received authority for so doing under the king's own hand. "And how would you then act?" inquired the messengers from the king. "In such a way," replied Ercole, "as I might

think best calculated to recover my dominions:" and believing from this answer that he intended to pursue the design, they all returned overjoyed to carry the intelligence to the king. But Ercole, on the contrary, immediately communicated to duke Borso the whole negociation that had just taken place, as well as his own answer to the king. The duke was greatly touched at this proof of honorable conduct on the part of Ercole, and entreated him to persevere, and receive the answer of the king. In a short time letters were delivered to him from his majesty, expressing his perfect readiness to afford him, as he had always wished, every assistance in his power, to accomplish the object he had in view, representing that an occasion seemed now to offer itself, which ought not to be omitted, if he had the resolution to execute what he had previously meditated; and exhorting him to rely confidently on the messenger now sent, as much as if he, the king himself, were present.

Ercole immediately proceeded to lay these letters before Borso, who had scarcely read them before he received other letters, advising him to be upon his guard against Ercole, who entertained designs of depriving him both of his territories and his life. Duke Borso, addressing the bearer of the letters aloud, replied: "Tell your master from me, that the

long services of prince Ercole towards the house of Arragon, merit a far different reward; and that he ought to beware, lest in his attempts to accomplish another's ruin, he should chance to prepare his own." This was by no means an agreeable reply to the messenger, who was immediately dismissed. Borso then turning to Ercole, observed: "Continue, prince, to manifest the same regard for me, a regard which I think my affection for you deserves. You shall have no reason to complain of me and my conduct towards you in return." Ercole thanked him for these expressions of esteem, and set out with cheerful and happy feelings on his return to Modena.

When the king of Naples heard the insulting answer of duke Borso from his messenger, his indignation was such, that he now resolved to revenge himself upon both. With this view he fixed upon several bold and reckless characters who dwelt in Modena, whom he conceived best fitted for his purpose. Having formerly been acquainted with Ercole in Naples, and lived upon familiar terms both with him and Borso, they, laying aside every feeling of gratitude and affection, consented to accomplish their ruin, on condition of receiving as the reward of their treason certain castles in the dominions of the king. They determined, therefore, to flatter Ercole with the

hopes of recovering his inheritance, and taking advantage of a favourable occasion, they affected to feel great indignation at the idea of his having been so long deprived of his rightful heritage. "The truth is," they continued, "we have waited so long in vain for the death of Borso, that we are now resolved to make you master of your own territories by force. Besides, we do not feel at all easy about your succession, as he will doubtless wish his nephew Niccolo, in pursuance of his promise to his deceased brother, to succeed him. We will either kill him or take him prisoner, as you like best; but we are determined that you shall henceforth become our ruler." In his indignation at their treachery, Ercole had very nearly betrayed himself; but checking himself, he affected to enter into their designs, merely requesting to know in what way they imagined it would best succeed. "It is the easiest thing in the world," answered the traitors; "we are in Borso's confidence; we have frequently feasted him at our tables, and as he is soon coming our way, and has already sent to desire us to bear him company, we can take measures to lay hands upon him as he comes, and thus deliver him into your power. You may then assume your just title and power: if you fail to do so, it will be entirely your own fault."

"This is certainly a most excellent scheme," returned Ercole; "and I think it may be effected almost as easily as you say. Yet it will require mature consideration to bring it all to a favorable issue. Come to me again to-morrow, and we will adopt final measures for putting it into execution." They then took their leave of Ercole, not a little elated with their imaginary success.

Ercole, aware that this was a new snare laid for him by the king, who would not fail to accuse him to Borso of treason, bringing these young men as witnesses against him, hastened secretly to Ferrara, under cover of the night, nor slackened his pace until he arrived at the palace, where he demanded admission to the duke. Borso sent the messenger back to learn who was in his company; and on hearing he was alone, he sent a guard of twenty cavaliers, with orders to admit none but Ercole, from whom he eagerly inquired the urgent nature of his business. "The treachery of the king of Naples," was the reply, "aims not only at my life, but at that of your excellency;" and here Ercole repeated the whole of his last interview with the traitors, in which they endeavoured, by engaging him in their schemes, to accomplish the ruin of both. "I was on the point," he continued, "of chastising them as they

deserved; but judged it better first to acquaint your excellency with the extent of their villany, in order to abide by your opinion in this, as in all other affairs." The duke was astonished on hearing their names, having always accounted them amongst the most faithful of his adherents. Yet the voice, the countenance, and the open manner of Ercole, gave so strong an assurance of his sincerity, that he did not venture to question, for a moment, the truth of his statements. Turning towards him with the utmost confidence, the duke exclaimed: "What am I henceforth to think of the honour and fidelity of mankind, when these very persons whom I have so long trusted and favoured as my friends, are found guilty of conspiring against my life? But in order that they may meet with such punishment as their conduct deserves, I should still wish you to feign approbation of their designs, and to render me an exact account of all their motions." Ercole then mounted his horse, and returned to Modena, where he again met the conspirators on the following day, flattering them that he was now prepared to undertake the great enterprise for which they were there assembled; and that he entertained no doubts of its ultimate success. At the same time he took care to forward to the duke intelligence of every thing which occurred.

The ringleader of the plot, pretending that he was about to celebrate the marriage of one of his daughters, set out to Ferrara, with an invitation to the duke to favour him with the honour of his company at the approaching nuptials. Borso courteously complied with the request, and immediately sent to acquaint Ercole with the fact, and with the measures which he conceived it most judicious to adopt. On the appointed day, when the conspirators were prepared to wait upon the duke, in order to escort him to Modena, they first called upon their friend Ercole, to acquaint him, that early on the following morning they should set out to attend the duke, and delivering him a prisoner into his hands on their return, hoped to hail him as the new ruler of Ferrara. "Heaven so prosper your design," cried Ercole, "as I mean to bestow upon each of you such a share of the prize, that you will never need to wish for more." They then proceeded to marshal their band of followers, a troop of thirty horse, all brave and reckless men, who were appointed to meet on a certain day in the plains of Buon Porto, where they would be instructed how to act. Ercole, on his side, had written to his brother Gismondo, the governor of Reggio, to furnish as many lances, and other troops, as he could collect, and then hasten to join him in Mo-

dena; or follow with the utmost expedition to Ferrara, in order to secure the persons of certain traitors conspiring against his own life and that of the duke. The next morning, Ercole and the conspirators mounted horse at the break of day, and set out at a gentle pace, all in high spirits, and jesting with one another as they went along. But they had scarcely arrived at Finale, when they suddenly found themselves surrounded by Gismondo with four hundred horse, and at the same moment Ercole unsheathed his sword, and rushing upon the leader of the conspirators, who rode near him, proclaimed him his prisoner; crying out: "Yield, traitors, yield! Did you imagine your base attempts against the noble duke's life and my own, were unknown to us? No, you will soon meet with the just vengeance your crimes deserve. Guards, seize your prisoners; bind them and follow us to Ferrara." Thus secured, they were conducted to their dungeon in the castle, momentarily awaiting the tidings of their doom.

After expressing his gratitude to the two brothers, the duke, dismissing them to the government of their respective cities, commanded the Podestà to attend and take the depositions of the prisoners, being resolved to penetrate into their motives for such an atrocious attempt. Perceiving no chance of mak-

ing their escape, they confessed their guilt, of which they felt truly sensible, and admitted that they deserved to meet their fate, as they had aimed at compassing the death both of Ercole and the duke. The Podestà, upon this, inveighed bitterly against their ingratitude and cruelty, in thus consenting, at the instance of their worst enemy, to turn their arms against their benefactor and friend, who had lavished innumerable honours upon them. Without pleading the least mitigation of their crimes, the unfortunate men could only entreat the Podestà that he would deign to use his influence with the duke, to treat them rather according to his known clemency and generosity, than the strict tenor of the law. On obtaining their confessions, the duke immediately proceeded to advise the king of Naples, that he had secured the band of conspirators, who were then awaiting their sentence at his hands: that he had been greatly shocked on discovering his majesty to have been a party to their design of assassinating two of his majesty's most faithful adherents, as the duke and Ercole always esteemed themselves; one of whom had promoted his interests both in peace and war for above twenty years, while the other had shown himself ready to lay down his life and dominions in the same cause: that the sole fruits these men had reaped

in their nefarious attempt, were disgrace, imprisonment, and, were they to meet with their just deserts, a shameful death: that further, it would be for his majesty's interest in future, rather to acknowledge the services of his faithful friends and servants, than to compass their destruction by those despicable means which had now been more than once employed against them.

On reading these words, the conscience-smitten king manifested the strongest signs of emotion, and his pride sunk beneath the deep humiliation which he suffered. "Alas!" he cried, "the duke only speaks the truth;" and such was his remorse, that suddenly laying aside his long fostered hatred, he wrote back word, that if he had greatly erred in giving way to feelings of hostility against the noble duke and his friend, he was now truly sorry for it; and was fully sensible of the fidelity and good-will they expressed for him, of which he trusted to give more convincing proofs in his future conduct. He entreated at the same time that Borso would be equally ready to enter into his views, and as a pledge of their reconciliation, consent to release the unfortunate men, who at his instigation, had conspired against their noble benefactor.

When the duke had perused the king's letter,

"Time only will shew," he cried, "what are the real dispositions of the king towards me and Ercole. As for his appeal to my generosity in favour of the prisoners, it is perfectly unnecessary, as I had already determined, without his interference, to pardon them. I shall, however, do it with the greater readiness, since we are of the same opinion upon the subject."

The wretched men were then ordered to be brought before the duke, who, having first obtained the consent of Ercole, addressed them in the following words: "Your treacherous and ungrateful conduct amply merits a more severe punishment than it is in any human power to inflict. As I cannot do you justice, therefore, in that respect, I trust the compassion I mean to shew you may be sufficient to overcome the base and heartless designs you entertained against your best friends. However little you may deserve it, you shall this day admit that I at least have learned how to temper my power, of which you wished to deprive me, with mercy, in pardoning the worst of malefactors. But should you repent of and amend your conduct, you may believe me when I say, that I shall never remind you of what has passed; the way is still open to our former favor and protection. Should you attempt to repeat your offence, you shall be held up to the world as a

fearful and memorable example of the judgment of heaven upon irreclaimable and inveterate vice. But now I forgive you; and my noble-minded friend, Ercole, forgives you, trusting that you will yet become worthy of your former selves, and give your friends reason rather to love and to honour you, than to inflict upon you the penalties of the law." Here the duke stopped; while overpowered with a variety of feelings, the wretched men were unable to utter a word. Though snatched from the fate which awaited them, their shame and remorse were terrible: one of them at length, subduing his feelings, exclaimed in a voice scarcely audible: "Oh, my dear lord and master, the absolute devotion of our lives to your service, and that of your noble house, under obligations almost as deep and lasting as we owe to heaven itself, will be too little to express our gratitude. We ventured hardly to look up to heaven for mercy, and yet we have found it in the very persons against whom our arm was raised. Show us then only how we can lay down the lives you have so generously spared, in some way for your honour and interest:" and the young man wept as he embraced the duke's feet. But the latter raising him up, pressed his hand affectionately in his own, observing the same manners towards the rest of the prisoners, whom, after a few

days he dismissed to their own abodes, where they were received by Ercole with every demonstration of kindness.

Not long after this act of clemency, Ercole, by the death of Borso, succeeded to the dukedom, by the unanimous consent of the people, and the king of Naples, aware of his great prudence and bravery, bestowed his daughter upon him in marriage. And when the Venetians declared war against Ferrara, the duke was so well supported, that the republic, after a long and severe struggle, was induced to propose a fresh treaty of peace.

FIRST DECADE, NOVELLA IX.*

There was a Greek merchant from Corfù, who having trafficked in various parts of Italy, at length settled in Mantua. His name was Filargiro, one of the most avaricious characters in the world; for, though he had realized a handsome property, all his thoughts were bent upon amassing more and more, his avarice still increasing with the increase of his wealth. It happened that on returning one day from a sale of some of his goods, with a purse of four hundred gold crowns, while engaged in transacting other business, he was unlucky enough to lose the whole sum; nor was he aware of his loss until he reached home. Arriving there, he opened an immense chest containing many thousand crowns, and on preparing to add the four hundred to the

* This story is taken from the sixteenth of Petrus Alphonsus, in which we have a philosopher instead of the Marquis of Mantua. The merchant, likewise, pretends that there were two golden serpents, though he only advertised the loss of one, which made his deceit more flagrant, as the omission was less probable. This story has been imitated in innumerable tales and facetiæ, both French and Italian. *History of Fiction*, vol. ii. p. 434.

number, he was struck dumb with astonishment to find that they were gone. He uttered an exclamation of horror every time he put his hand into each of his pockets, till convinced at last that his loss was but too true, he ran off in great consternation along the path he had come, inquiring of the very dogs he met on the way whether they had seen or seized upon his treasure. He was quite confounded when he reached the place where he had first received the money, without obtaining the least tidings of it. Almost overwhelmed with despair, he suddenly bethought him, as a last resource, to apply to the marquis, entreating that a public crier might be instantly sent forth, and offering the sum of forty crowns for the recovery of his treasure. With great courtesy the marquis acceded to his request, expressing himself at the same time concerned to witness the excessive affliction under which the unfortunate Filargiro seemed to labour. The reward was accordingly proclaimed, and the gold soon afterwards made its appearance in the hands of one of those aged old ladies, who being great devotees, always walk with their eyes upon the ground as they come from church. In this way she discovered the lost treasure, and fearful lest her conscience should be loaded with such a weight of gold, though extremely poor, she would have been very

greatly perplexed in what way to act, had she not luckily heard the crier announcing the reward of forty crowns, which she hoped she might receive with a safe conscience. Observing her destitute appearance, the marquis very humanely inquired whether she had any means of procuring her subsistence, and whether she had no one to assist her. "I have nothing," she replied, "but what I gain by the work of my hands, and the help of one daughter; we weave and spin, signor, to earn as much as we want, living in the fear of the Lord, in the best way we are able. My daughter, to be sure, I should wish to see married before I die, but I have nothing to give her for a portion." The marquis, on hearing the poor woman's account of herself, highly praised her integrity in thus restoring what she might so easily have reserved for herself, and for a marriage portion for her daughter; observing that it was an action of which he feared that few others, under the same temptation, would have been capable. He then summoned the merchant, informing him that the lost treasure was found, and requesting him at the same time to put into the poor woman's hands the stated reward. The raptures of the miser were truly amusing when he beheld and seized upon the gold, even in the presence of the marquis; but on

hearing the demand of the stipulated sum, his countenance again fell, and he began to think how he could possibly withhold the promised reward. Having numbered the pieces once or twice exactly over, though he found them perfectly correct, he turned towards the old woman, saying: "There are four-and-thirty ducats short of the sum which I put into this bag." The old lady appeared extremely confused at this accusation, exclaiming in a distressed tone to the marquis: "Oh, signor, can that be possible? is it likely I should have stolen thirty-four ducats, when I had it in my power to possess myself of the whole? No; believe me, noble signor, I swear, as I value my hopes of heaven, that I have restored the exact sum which I found on my return from church; not a single farthing have I taken out." But the miserly old wretch continuing to affirm most solemnly that the ducats were in the same bag with the crowns, and that she must consider them as a sufficient remuneration, the affair seemed to perplex the marquis not a little. Yet when he reflected that the old miser had only mentioned the four hundred crowns in the first instance, he began to suspect his design of imposing upon the poor woman, in order to save the paltry sum offered as a reward. The marquis felt the utmost indignation

at the discovery of this deceit, believing no punishment to be too severe for this despicable breach of faith. But checking his rising passion for a moment, he reflected that the most effectual chastisement he could bestow upon the miser's attempt to impose upon the magistracy, would be to make him fall into the very snare he had laid for another. With this view, he thus addressed the merchant: "And why did you not mention the full amount of your loss, before proclaiming the reward?" "I overlooked it; I quite forgot it," was the reply. "But it seems somewhat strange that you, who appear so particular about trifles, should not have recollected the circumstance of the ducats. And as far as I can understand, you wish to recover what is not your own. I mean to say that this bag of gold could never have belonged to you at all, since the sum you first mentioned is not to be found in it. I imagine the real owner to be myself, since a servant of mine lost exactly the sum here contained, on the very same day you pretend to have lost yours." The marquis then turned towards the old woman, observing; "Since it is clear that the money is none of his, but mine, and you have had the good luck to find it, pray keep it:—the whole is your own; present it as a wedding gift to your daughter. If it should happen that you meet with another

purse, containing the ducats as well as the crowns, belonging to this gentleman, I beg you will return it to him without demanding any reward." The poor lady expressed her gratitude to the marquis for this generous mark of his favour, and promised to observe his directions in every thing. The wretched merchant, finding that the marquis had truly penetrated into his motives, and that there was not a chance of succeeding in his nefarious design, declared that he was now quite willing to pay the reward he had promised, if she restored the remaining money, which was indisputably his own. But it was now too late; the marquis turning towards him with an angry air, threatened to punish him for such a disgraceful attempt to defraud another of so large a sum; since from his own account, it could not possibly be his. "Get out of my presence, and beware how you exasperate me further. If this good woman should be fortunate enough to meet with the purse, with the exact amount you mention, she has promised to restore it to you untouched. That I think is enough."

Without venturing to answer a single word, the unhappy Filargiro was compelled to leave the place, unaccompanied by his newly-recovered treasure, and filled with sorrow and regret at having refused to

fulfil the conditions he had made. The poor old woman, on the other hand, went away overjoyed with her unexpected good fortune, and full of gratitude to the marquis. She hastened to impart the happy tidings to her daughter, who after having long indulged a vain attachment, had at length the pleasure of being united to the object of her choice, at the expense of the avaricious old merchant.

FIFTH DECADE, NOVELLA IV.

At the period when the celebrated Giovanni Trivulzi was appointed by the king of France governor of Milan, the capital city of Lombardy, a certain noble youth resided there, of the name of Giovanni Panigarola, whose bold and fiery temper involved him in frequent disputes, both with the soldiers and the citizens, to the no slight interruption of the public peace. This unruly disposition having more than once caused him to be brought before the governor, at the instance of several individuals with whom he had been engaged, he would probably have incurred the punishment due to his indiscretion, had not the venerable Trivulzi been more desirous of reforming offenders than of punishing them. Discharging him merely with a severe reprimand, out of regard to the feelings of the youth's family and friends, he trusted that he should hear of him no more. But this unfortunately was not the case; the perverse and ungrateful youth still pursuing the same perilous career in spite of the entreaties and reproaches of his best friends. Even his union with a pleasing and accomplished young lady of Lampogiani, named Filippa,

failed to convince him of the folly of his conduct: her tenderness and anxiety were lavished upon him in vain, and she lived in daily expectation of hearing of some calamitous event. Though he always treated her with the utmost kindness and affection, she would rather have been herself the victim of his quarrelsome and unhappy disposition, than have heard of his indulging it at the expense of others, and at the imminent risk of his own life. Unable to support this incessant anxiety, the fond Filippa would frequently conjure him to abstain from thus wantonly hazarding his reputation, and her own repose, for the sake of encouraging so idle and dangerous a propensity, which cost her so many tears. Then throwing her fair arms around him, she declared that she could not long live under the torments she endured on his behalf, being in hourly dread of beholding him borne homewards a lifeless corpse. "I had rather," she exclaimed, "that you would at once pierce my bosom with your sword, than listen to the sad accounts I am daily expecting to hear of you; so derogatory to your own honour and the name you bear, and frequently, I fear, so unjust towards the objects of your resentment. I entreat you, therefore, by our long attachment, by all my unutterable love and devotion to you, that, if

you have any pity or gentleness in your nature, you will henceforth become more reasonable, and avoiding occasions of embroiling yourself with others, consent to lead the blameless and honourable life for which your abilities and your connexions are, in every way, so well calculated to qualify you. Then, and then only, shall I consider myself truly happy; blest with your society, and enjoying the honour and respectability of your name."

Whilst listening to the kind and judicious words of her he loved, Giovanni sincerely promised reformation, and believed that he could renounce all his errors, and never more give her reason to complain. But when he was again exposed to temptations, when his boon companions repeatedly invited him, and half mad with wine, he received imaginary insults from the guests, borne away by the force of his habitual passions, he quickly gave, or as quickly received offence. About this time, the kind governor, Trivulzi, was recalled to France, and one of a more severe and implacable disposition soon after assumed his place. Nor was it long before the luckless Giovanni embroiled himself in a hot dispute with an officer of the governor's guards, until proceeding from words to blows, they drew their daggers, and his adversary in a few seconds lay

dead at Giovanni's feet. He was speedily secured by several other officers who had witnessed the fact, and being carried before the new governor, was condemned on the following day to lose his head. When these tidings reached the ears of his poor wife, so far from being prepared by all her former fears for so fatal an occurrence, she gave way to the extremity of wretchedness and despair. Inveighing against the cruelty of the governor, her own and her husband's unhappy fate, she beat her bosom, she tore her hair, and refused the consolations of her nearest relatives. "I will not be comforted," she exclaimed in a tone of agony, "you do not, you cannot know, the sufferings I endure; and may God, in his infinite mercy, grant that none of you ever may! Away, away then, and attempt not to assuage the burning agony I feel. It is worse than death; and death I could suffer a thousand times rather than my husband should thus wretchedly and ignominiously end his days."

Fearing lest she might be induced by the excess of her feelings to put a period to her existence, her friends were unwilling to leave her for a moment alone. Yet finding their attempts to console her were vain, they stood silently about her couch, until the object of their solicitude having wearied her-

self with her lamentations, came at length to the resolution of either saving her beloved husband, or perishing in the attempt. With this view she declared to her friends around her that the only means of mitigating her sorrow, would be to procure for her a final interview with her husband, that she might at least have the sad consolation of bidding him an eternal farewell. Compassionating her forlorn condition, they all united in soliciting their husbands and brothers to endeavour to obtain this favour from the governor; and it was permitted that during that night she might share the unhappy youth's imprisonment. Great was the emotion experienced on both sides when they met; she threw herself into his arms, and her tender reproaches half died away on her lips. "Alas! alas! to what a state has your inconsiderate conduct reduced us! Have I lived to hear that to-morrow you are condemned to suffer death, and that I am doomed to live in the consciousness of such a sad and widowed lot! Ah, why did you not sooner yield to the repeated entreaties and reproaches of your unhappy wife? Did I not tell you that some fatal consequence would be sure, sooner or later, to follow? It is come, and you have sacrificed life upon life to your wicked and infatuated career. It is enough; and we have now to pay the

forfeit of all your folly, and of all——I fear, alas! I fear to speak it to one who should have time to repent, ere yet he die;" and her sobs here interrupting her voice, she gave way to a fresh burst of sorrow. He who had before appeared unmoved and collected, was now melted even to tears, on witnessing the deep sorrow of his wife, knowing how fondly she was attached to him, and how ill able she was to sustain the sorrows in store for her. "My own Filippa," he cried, gently raising her up, "I am sorry for you from the bottom of my soul; but try to calm yourself: why distress yourself thus for me? You see I am not terrified at the fate which awaits me. I had rather thus die, for having conducted myself valiantly against the brutal wretch who insulted me, than live ignominiously among my fellow citizens, under the control of the soldiers who domineer over us. One, at least, has paid the forfeit of his crime. Console yourself, therefore, my Filippa, seeing that I die honourably, and not like a false traitor or a bandit, but in the noble attempt to tame the ferocity of those who too nearly resemble them. It was the slave of the cruel governor who first provoked me to do the deed; nor could I have received the insulting language he made use of, without covering myself with eternal infamy. Then mourn not over my fate;

approve yourself worthy of my love; and as you have ever shewn yourself a sweet and obedient wife, so even now obey me in summoning fortitude and patience to bear our lot:" and kissing her tenderly, he sought to console her by every means in his power. But his kindness seeming only to increase her grief, she declared that she should never be able to survive the affliction of losing him thus, and that she was resolved to save him or to perish in the attempt. "Therefore," she continued, "am I come; and as I trust that the sufferings we have experienced in this trying scene, will have made some impression on your mind, instead of further indulging these womanish complaints, we will summon fortitude to avail ourselves of the last resource which fortune has left in our power."—"How! what is it you mean?" inquired her astonished husband. "That you should hasten to avoid the fate prepared for you by disguising yourself in these clothes, which I have brought hither for the purpose. Lose not a moment, for as we are nearly of the same age, and I am not much lower in stature than you, the deception will not easily be detected; and in my dress you may make your escape. The guards are all newly appointed, and unacquainted with your person. Once safe yourself, indulge not the least anxiety about me.

I am innocent, and, vindictive as he may be, the governor will not venture to shed innocent blood."—"We cannot tell that," replied Giovanni, "and the very possibility of it is sufficient to make me decline your kind and noble-hearted offer. Should he even threaten you with death, my Filippa, the governor would be certain to have me in his hands again to-morrow. So say no more of this, my love," he continued, as he kissed away her fast falling tears, "and do not believe that I would thus vilely fly, as if I were afraid to meet my fate. What will the world, what will my dearest friends and fellow citizens say, when they hear that I have absconded, at the risk of your life, and thus confirmed the worst reports of my adversaries? No, Filippa, never; let me here terminate my restless days, rather than in any way endanger yours, which are far more precious in my eyes."

But the affliction and despair exhibited by his gentle wife on hearing these words were such as may be easier imagined than expressed; nor did she cease uttering the most wild and incoherent lamentations, until entertaining fears for her reason, he retracted his purpôse, and promised to favour her design. And as she now assisted him, between sobs and smiles, to assume his female attire, she declared

that she could have borne the thought of his death, fighting bravely in the field, or in any way, except by the hands of the public executioner. "It would then," said she, "have been my duty to support myself; but the very idea of your dear life being thus thrown, like a wild weed, away, would have embittered all my future existence. For I recollect having frequently heard my honoured father say, and he was one of the most valiant and high-minded of our citizens, that the truly brave ought never to shun death when a noble occasion offers of serving either their country or their friends; but that it must be truly grievous to the wretch who is compelled to meet it unsupported by any generous enterprise, or any sense of honour. And alas! I fear you would, at last, feel yourself too much in the latter situation, and for myself, I should doubly feel it. So now, dearest love, I entreat you to use every precaution in your power to avoid discovery, and effect your escape; breathe not a syllable to any one till you are beyond the reach of danger; consent not to gratify the cruelty of the governor, but save yourself for more honourable enterprises, which may confound the malice of your enemies;" and saying this she conjured him to hasten away.

Taking a hasty farewell, therefore, Giovanni bound

his cloak more closely about him, and presented himself, just as the morning dawned, before the sentinels of the prison. Believing him to be the lady on her return from her husband, he was allowed to pass, without examination or suspicion. In the morning the officers entered the prison to bind the hands of the culprit, and lead him forth to execution; when the lady, turning suddenly round upon them, inquired, with an air of authority, whether they had been commissioned to treat her with this indignity? On discovering her sex, and after searching every part of the prison for the real offender in vain, the governor was immediately made acquainted with the truth. He ordered her to be instantly conducted into his presence, in the utmost rage at the idea of having been thus overreached by a woman; and so far from commiserating her situation, he threatened her with the severest punishment, declaring that her life should answer for his, and commanding the officers upon their duty, to proceed to the place of execution. Thither then the devoted wife was carried, in spite of her tears and entreaties, and those of the surrounding people, among whom tidings of the fact having quickly gone forth, a vast concourse of each sex, and of all ages, were speedily assembled. Mingled sorrow and admiration were depicted on

every countenance, and each manly breast burned with admiration of a woman of such exalted fidelity and truth, and with a wish to rescue her from so unmerited a doom. But everywhere surrounded by the tyrant's satellites, the wretched lady, invoking the name of her husband, and appealing for justice and mercy in vain, now approached the scene of her execution, and amidst the horror and indignation of the spectators, was on the point of sealing her unexampled fidelity with her life. At this moment a loud cry was heard amongst the spectators, a sword flashed above the heads of the people, and the tumult approaching nearer, Giovanni issued from the crowd, and the next moment had rescued his beloved wife from the soldiers' hands. Yet fearful lest any act of violence might involve them both in the same fate, he instantly surrendered his sword, and embracing his weeping wife, "Did I not tell you, that I would never permit you to fall a victim to your incomparable generosity and truth? Unhand her, wretches," he cried, turning towards the officers, "I am your prisoner, and those bonds are only mine."—"No! obey the governor's commands," cried the lady, "it is I who am sentenced to suffer; venture not to dispute his orders; no, I will not be released," she continued, as they were about to set her free; and a

scene of mutual tenderness and devotion then took place, which drew tears from the hardest heart.

In the mean time the governor, having heard of the arrival of Giovanni, with the same unrelenting cruelty gave orders that both should be executed on the spot: the husband for the homicide he had committed, and his consort for effecting the release of the criminal from prison. The indignation of the citizens on hearing this inhuman sentence could no longer be controlled. An instantaneous attack was made upon the soldiers and officers of the guard, who were prevented from proceeding with their cruel purpose, while numbers rushed towards the mansion of the governor, declaring that they would have justice, and insisting that the whole affair should be laid before the king. Though highly enraged at this popular interference with his sanguinary measures, the governor was compelled to bend before the storm, and with evident reluctance submitted to refer the matter to his royal master. This was no other than the celebrated Francis, whose singular magnanimity, united to his pleasing and courteous manners, still render him so justly dear to the French people.

On receiving an account of the noble and generous manner in which the lady had conducted her-

self, and of the worth and valour of her husband, with the proofs of mutual fidelity and affection which they had displayed, King Francis, with his usual liberality and clemency, issued his commands, that they should instantly, without any further proceedings, be set at liberty. He, moreover, expressed his high admiration of their mutual truth and constancy, and approved of the good feeling and spirit evinced by the Milanese people, declaring his only regret to be, that it was not in his power to render such examples of heroic worth as immortal as they deserved to be. After a more strict investigation of the unhappy affair in which Giovanni had been last engaged, it was discovered that his adversary had really been the aggressor, and had instigated him, both by words and blows, to the terrible revenge which he had taken; in prosecuting which, at the risk of his own life, he had laid the insulting soldier dead at his feet.

Great was the triumph of the people of Milan when the tidings of the pardon of the prisoners arrived, and they paraded the streets with shouts of applause in honour of King Francis, whose clemency and magnanimity failed not to add to his popularity among all ranks. Nor was the rage and disappointment of the bad governor inferior to the joy of the people upon this occasion, as he beheld the procession

bearing the happy pair in triumph to their home. The inhabitants instantly despatched a deputation to the French monarch, expressing their grateful sense of his kindness, and their devoted attachment to his royal person.

Such, likewise, was the favourable impression made upon the character of Giovanni by this occurrence, that, influenced also by the excellent example of his wife, he, from that period, entirely abandoned the dangerous courses which he had so long pursued.*

* The stratagem which conjugal affection here suggests to the wife of the criminal, has been more than once successfully practised in real life. The two most memorable instances are those of the Earl of Nithsdale, who by this means escaped from the Tower in 1716, and Count La Valette, whose deliverance under the same circumstances at Paris, is fresh in the public recollection.

SEVENTH DECADE, NOVELLA IX.

After the death of Leo the Tenth, the Holy See long remained vacant, owing to the want of unanimity of opinion among the Cardinals, who were unwilling to advance to the papal dignity, any one of those sitting in the conclave, such were their clashing interests. This division afterwards led to the promotion of Adriano, who had most probably never dreamed of such an honour during the whole course of his life.

During the interim there arose many serious tumults and disturbances in Rome, and more especially in the immediate vicinity, where the woods and roads were on all sides infested with banditti, so that no travellers could pass with safety from place to place. Although the government exercised the utmost vigilance in repressing these disorders, their authors still found an asylum in the caves and mountains, whence they only issued to fall like wild beasts upon their prey, and woful was the fate of those who fell into their hands. It was during this period that Adriano arrived at Rome to assume the pontifical chair, and having arranged the internal affairs of the city, he attended to

the complaints of the increasing disorders in the vicinity, resolving to take measures to extirpate the whole race of banditti out of his dominions. Summoning the head of the police to his presence, to him he committed the charge, as the most courageous and prudent officer he knew, of penetrating into the hidden retreats and fastnesses occupied by these ferocious men. After receiving his commission, the officer immediately provided himself with a select company, both of horse and foot, ready furnished with all kinds of arms and equipments, and attended by a vast number of the fiercest dogs, as if he had been about to make an expedition to clear the woods and mountains of the beasts of prey. On arriving pretty near their haunts, his first object was to draw a line of circumvallation around the strong places which he had ascertained to be the chief rendezvous of the banditti; and then gradually drawing into a narrower circle, with strong nets so spread as to prevent escape, he advanced to the sound of horns and bugles, mingled with the shouts of men, and baying of the dogs, to rouse these human monsters from their lairs. The better to discover them, they now urged on the blood-hounds to the track, which soon obliged the robbers to shew themselves, and assume an attitude of defence. The officer com-

menced a vigorous assault, and after a sharp contest, in which several were killed, the robbers, intimidated by superior numbers, and the shouts of men and the baying of dogs, took to flight, each attempting to save himself in the best way he could. Upon this a strange scene presented itself, for the dogs, encouraged by their flight, pursued them with the utmost fury, running by their side, and seizing them by the legs or throat, which compelled the men to wheel round, and engage them with their sabres. Whichever way they fled, they still found themselves surrounded at all points, by dogs, and nets, and swords, from which they vainly endeavoured to extricate themselves. In this manner they continued to be gradually inclosed within a still narrower space, and their whole number being thus brought together, they again resolved to make a desperate stand. Though they fought with the strength of despairing men, it was still of no avail; and having no further place of refuge, they were all either killed or taken upon the spot. The survivors were hanged upon the nearest trees, without the least trial, or any investigation into their crimes, while their bodies were left a prey to the wolves and vultures of the mountains.

Out of the whole number there were only about twenty, who contrived to elude the vigilance of the

wary and valiant officer and his men. These were some, who on hearing their first approach from a neighbouring wood, and alarmed by the sound of bugles, and the clamour of the battle, concluding their comrades had fallen, fled as far as possible from their accustomed haunts. They at length drew up at an inn several miles distant, with the intention of there awaiting tidings of the result, having previously arrayed themselves in the rich dresses which had formerly belonged to more honourable personages. To give a greater air of probability to their new characters, a few of them had remained in their usual attire, the better to personate servants, who were attending upon their masters. Their leader appeared as one of the servants, perfectly aware of the magnitude of the danger, and quite on the alert. The gentlemen entered first, with a rolling and idle motion of their limbs, calling for rooms, and whatever the house could afford of the best; while their servants waited humbly at a distance.

In the mean while the officer having despatched his sanguinary business in the wood, gathered up his nets and the spoils of victory, proposing to proceed in the same manner, and enclose the adjacent thicket. In his progress, however, he encountered a shepherd, who informed him that he would only lose his

labour, by repeating the same operation, as he had just met a party of the banditti, dressed like gentlemen, coming out of the wood, on their way to Naples. The officer, being resolved to ascertain the truth of this account, sent forward one of his spies to obtain information, following him at an easy pace. The man proceeded until he arrived at the very inn where the gentlemen had put up, and introducing himself as a stranger, he ordered dinner to be prepared. The gentlemen, however, wishing to be thought courteous, invited him to dine with them, and entering into conversation, when they found he was going on to Naples, inquired if he had lately heard any thing new? "Nothing very new, signor," replied the stranger, "except that as I came out of Rome, I happened to meet the brave head of the police returning, and he told me that he had just made such complete havoc amongst the banditti, that he believed there was not one left alive." Overjoyed on hearing this, the villains began to think themselves quite secure; for the officer, they believed, had now returned home, supposing they had all fallen into his hands.

After dinner the stranger got up, saying that he must proceed to Naples; but returning instantly to his employer, he informed him that he had found the robbers enjoying themselves at the inn. In a very short

space of time the brave officer was also there; but just as he was about to enter, the leader of the robbers, standing behind his pretended master's chair, near the window, observed the concourse of people at hand, among whom he marked also the identical stranger who had just left them. He was on the point of acquainting his companions, when he reflected, that all means of escape being cut off, he should only implicate himself in their fate in the tumult which would ensue. As a last effort to save himself, he therefore only observed to his master: "I tasted an excellent wine just now in the cellar, and I think, signor, it would suit your taste: I will step and see that the host plays you fair about it;" saying which, and carrying a huge dish before him, he somewhat promptly left the apartment. As he went down stairs he met the officer and his myrmidons coming up, who supposing him to be one of the servants of the house, inquired in what manner the strange gentlemen above were then employed? "They are still at table," he answered, in a pert tone, "and I am just going to bring them some more wine."—"Well, go, you rogue," returned the other, "and we will drink it."—"As you please for that, gentlemen," answered the waiter, and hastened as quickly as possible into the vault, thence exploring his way out by a se-

cret passage, until he found himself in a place of safety.

The officer had by this time seized and secured the party of gentlemen at table, and taking possession of their seats, ordered a fresh dinner, every moment expecting the excellent wine which the rogue of a waiter had promised to bring. At length turning to the host, he desired to know what that waiter of his, whom they had met on the stairs, was so very long about? "No waiter of mine is gone for wine, signor; he belonged to the party of gentlemen whom you have just seized."—"Ah, can that be true?" cried the officer. "It is, it is," cried the whole band, as if displeased that he was not to share the same fate. "He was our servant; that is, he was our captain, we mean. In that disguise he has imposed both upon you and upon us. For, seeing you at hand, as we have reason to believe, he pretended to go for wine, and left us, without saying a word, to fall into your hands, escaping from the fate which he saw prepared for his companions, and thus shewing himself as prudent as we have been vain and foolish."

Enraged at the idea of having been thus outwitted by the chief of the gang, whom he was in particular desirous of securing, the officer everywhere sought

to discover his retreat, but in vain. He was at length compelled to return with his other prisoners to Rome, where the unfortunate gentlemen immediately shared the fate of their companions.

The sole survivor of the gang, who, by his coolness and penetration had saved himself, succeeded in secretly leaving the papal dominions, and retired beyond the jurisdiction of the church into the Florentine territories. He had there time to repent, and abandoning the wicked career upon which he had first entered, he became a very honest citizen, and an example of sobriety, industry, and charity to all his neighbours.

Novels of Anton-Francesco Grazzini.

ANTON-FRANCESCO GRAZZINI.*

THIS very pleasing novelist was born at Florence, on the 22d day of March, 1503. He was of good descent, the family of the Grazzini of Staggia being accounted noble, and ranking among the wealthiest citizens of Florence; many of its branches are still vigorous and flourishing. Little more is known relative to our author's early life and education, than that he was brought up to the medical profession, which he soon abandoned for the more agreeable pursuit of letters. In this new career he acted in concert with the earliest founders of one of the most celebrated literary institutions of Italy, the Academy Della Crusca; and he was also a member of the Academy which adopted the title of the *Umidi*. It was incumbent on each of the members of the latter society, in support of their character as *Umidi*, to assume the name of some fish, for which reason Grazzini took that of *Il Lasca*, or the Mullet. From

* La Prima e la Seconda Cena di Anton-Francesco Grazzini, detto il Lasca, &c.

the *Libro de' Capitoli*, we learn that his appropriate device was a mullet in the act of swimming, upon a green shield, with a butterfly displaying its wings above. This is supposed by some ingenious critics to allude to the strange and whimsical talents of our author; this fish being accustomed to launch itself out of the water in pursuit of butterflies, whose flights he considered as a type of his own vagaries. It is indeed this remarkably lively disposition which runs through his whole style and manner, that renders Lasca so great a favourite with the Italians, though it is difficult to discover in his novels themselves any striking claims to superiority. For, admirably told as they are, the subjects are often less happy than those of very inferior writers.

Besides his novels, Grazzini was the author of several comedies and poems, most of which are richly imbued with the same humorous spirit that he displayed in his stories and conversation; and he often expresses himself with attic elegance and wit. With regard to style, his works were held in such estimation as to be enumerated among the *testi di lingua*, being in general easy, simple, and elegant. They betray no traces of imitation, and are free from the affectation of employing obsolete words and phrases. Of all the writers of his age no one therefore can be

proposed as a more perfect model of the simplicity and beauty of which the Italian language is so highly susceptible.

Lasca has moreover the merit of originality in his manner of introducing his stories. Instead of availing himself, like Cinthio and so many others, of the example of Boccaccio, which produced a host of servile imitators, who would seem to have caught every thing but the exquisite ease and spirit of their original, Lasca feigns, that during the pontificate of Paul III. and in the reign of those great princes, Charles V. and Francis I. a party of young people met together one afternoon, at the house of a rich widow lady, in order to visit her brother, then residing with her, one of the most amiable young men in all Florence, and who being passionately fond of music, possessed a collection of the finest musical instruments and melodies for the entertainment of his young friends. While engaged on this occasion in performing a little concert, the sky suddenly becomes overcast, and a heavy snow-storm follows, of which the company take advantage to amuse themselves by assailing one another with snow-balls. When wearied with their other sports, they assemble round their evening fire, and as a last resource, it is suggested that they should attempt to beguile the time until

the hour of supper, with relating these stories. As the notice, however, is so very short, the tales of their first winter evening are soon told; and it is therefore agreed, after the preparation of a week or two, to assemble again in order to regale themselves with other stories of greater length. Whether they had ever the pleasure of hearing these, remains a secret, as it is certain that many of them never made their appearance, having either been altogether lost, or continuing still unedited, if yet in existence.

The second evening, comprehending ten stories, was first edited in 1743, and was afterwards republished, along with the first evening, at Paris, though with the date of London, in 1756. "The ninth of the second night," says Mr. Dunlop, "corresponds with the seventh of Firenzuola, and the tenth with a tale of Fortini. The last story contains an account of a cruel, and by no means ingenious trick, practised by Lorenzo de' Medici on a physician of Florence."

The death of Lasca occurred in 1583, in the 80th year of his age.

ANTON-FRANCESCO GRAZZINI.

SECOND EVENING, NOVELLA I.

We learn from ancient accounts of Pisa, that it was formerly esteemed one of the most wealthy and powerful cities, not only of Tuscany, but of all Italy, and celebrated for the courage and activity of its inhabitants. It happened that, a considerable time previous to its subjugation by the Florentine republic, a certain Milanese doctor, who had been studying medicine at Paris, came, for a short time, to take up his residence there. During his stay, he met with such uncommon success in his practice among the citizens, several of whom he had snatched from the very jaws of destruction, that with fees and reputation increasing upon him so fast, he scarcely thought himself justified in leaving a place, to the customs and manners of whose inhabitants he was already becoming attached. He therefore felt inclined to abandon his native city altogether, and very shortly ceased even to think that there was such a place as Milan in the world. For he had heard, only a few days before his arrival at Pisa, that his aged mother, the sole re-

lation whom he had left behind, had departed this life. So he believed that he could do nothing better than continue where he was, and at no distant period, by his industry and success, he amassed a considerable fortune, took an elegant house, and assumed the dignified title of Maestro Basilio da Milano.

Soon after, he had the pleasure of having it frequently hinted to him by several respectable Pisanese, that the honour of his alliance would, by no means, be unacceptable to them, and many were the young beauties who passed in review before him. Yet he at length fixed his eyes upon a young lady, both of whose parents were deceased, and who, though not rich, was of a good family. She brought the doctor little more as her wedding portion than the house she lived in, though she afterwards presented him with a large family; and for many years, increasing in wealth, they lived extremely happily together. By this lady he had three sons and a daughter, the latter of whom, as well as one of her brothers, their parents very happily bestowed in marriage, when they became old enough to settle in the world. The youngest boy had a decided taste for letters, while the second, who gave his parents great anxiety, was of an extremely dull and obstinate disposition; with a great aversion to learning and every

species of improvement; morose, abstracted, and unamiable, when his negative was once pronounced, it was as unalterable as his own nature. The doctor at last finding that he could mould him into nothing, to get rid of him, sent him into the country, where he had purchased, at least, half a dozen different estates, and whither he was fond of retiring to escape the continued noise and turbulence of the city. But about ten years after he had despatched his son Lazzaro, for this was the fool's name, into this retreat, there arose a dreadful malady in Pisa, which carried off numbers of people, in a violent fever, which subsiding into a deep lethargy, they awakened no more, and it was moreover as infectious as the plague. The doctor, desirous of shewing his skill, and taking the lead of the other physicians on this occasion, exposed himself so fearlessly for his fees, that he took the infection, which soon set at defiance every application of his most esteemed syrups and recipes, and in a few hours he retired from the profession for ever. Nor was this all, for he communicated the disease to his family, and one after another they all died, until there was only an old nurse left alive in the house.

It was, indeed, a dreadful visitation upon all Pisa, and the mortality would have been still greater, had

not the survivors fled in haste from the city. With the change of season, however, its severity seemed to mitigate, the persons attacked gradually recovered, the inhabitants returned to their houses, and the people resumed their usual occupations.

It was now that Lazzaro succeeded to all the property left by his deceased relations, though he merely added a single domestic to the reduced establishment of his father, consisting only of the old servant. His farms and the receipt of his rents were left in the care of an agent, as he bestowed no attention upon business. Many families, notwithstanding, appeared anxious for the honour of his alliance, without making the slightest objection to his rusticity and folly; but the only answer that he uniformly returned to these proposals was, that he had made up his mind to wait for at least four years, and that he afterwards might, perhaps, be induced to think of it. As he was known never to have changed his mind, no one importuned him further upon the subject. Though he was fond of amusements in his own way, he admitted no one to his confidence, and started on beholding a card of invitation like a guilty spirit at the sign of the cross.

Opposite to his house there resided a man of the name of Gabriello, with his wife and two children, a

boy about five years old, and a little girl, whom he supported as well as he was able, by his skill in bird-catching and fishing. Though his abode was humble, his nets and cages were of the very best construction, and he managed them so judiciously, that with the assistance of his wife, Santa, who had the reputation of an excellent sempstress, he made a very pretty livelihood. It happened that Gabriello was an exact counterpart, in voice, countenance, and appearance, of our foolish friend Lazzaro; their very complexion and their beards were of the same cut and quality. If they were not twin brothers, they ought to have been so, for they were not only of the same age and stature, but in their taste and manners they greatly resembled each other. It would have been impossible even for the fisherman's wife to have recognized Lazzaro, disguised in the dress of her husband; the only distinction that could be made was, that one was dressed as a labourer, and the other like a gentleman. Pleased with the happy resemblance which he could not but acknowledge between himself and the fisherman, and fancying it laid him under a sort of obligation, for which he felt grateful, he began to solicit his acquaintance. This he did in the pleasantest manner possible, frequently sending him good things from his table, and a bottle of old wine. The fish-

erman's gratitude was so pleasing, that he soon also sent for him to dine and sup with him, passing the evenings in the most agreeable conversations imaginable; the adventures of the good fisherman, and the prodigious lies he told, being a never-failing source of admiration and delight to Lazzaro. For the fisherman's skill extended far beyond his art, and the rogue contrived to insinuate himself into the good graces of his patron, until the latter was hardly ever easy out of his company.

Thus, having one day treated his rustic friend to a noble feast, they began to talk, over their wine, of the various modes of fishing, all of which were explained greatly to the satisfaction of the host. None, however, seemed to take his fancy so much as the description of the diving net, on which the fisherman dwelt with uncommon enthusiasm, as the most useful and delightful invention in the world. It inspired Lazzaro with the ambition of immediately witnessing a specimen of this part of the piscatory art, in which great fish may be caught, not with nets and lines merely, but with the very mouth, a drag-net hanging round the neck of the diving fisherman! "Oh, let us go now! let us go now!" exclaimed the happy Lazzaro, while the guest, as usual, expressed himself ready to attend his patron. As it happened to be the

middle of summer, nothing could be better; and finishing their dessert, Gabriello took his drag-nets, and they went out together. They bent their way through the Porta à Mare, directly towards the Arno, along the fence of pales, above the great bank crowned with alder-trees, spreading a most delicious shade. There the fisherman begged his patron to sit down and refresh himself, while he observed the manner in which he should proceed. Having first stripped himself, he bound the nets round his arms and neck, and then, boldly plunging into the river, down he went. But being a complete adept at his business, he rose again very shortly to the surface, bringing up with him at one drag, eight or ten great fish, all of the best kind. This was a real miracle in the eyes of Lazzaro, who could not divine how he could possibly see to catch them under water, and he resolved to ascertain the manner in which it was done. With this view, being a hot July day, and thinking that a cold bath might refresh him, he prepared, with Gabriello's assistance, to step in. He was conducted by him to a shallow part, and when about up to his knees, Gabriello left him to his own discretion: only warning him, that though the bottom shelved down very gradually, he had better go no farther than where a certain post rose above the rest, and pointing it out to him once more, he

pursued his business. Lazzaro felt singular pleasure in being thus left to himself, and splashing about, performed all sorts of antics in the water. His eyes were often fixed in admiration upon his friend Gabriello, who every now and then rose from the bottom with a fish in his mouth, the better to please his patron, who at this sight could no longer restrain his applause.

"It is very plain now," he cried, "that it must be light under water, or he could never have seen how to catch that fish in his mouth, besides all the others in his net; I wish I knew how." So saying, the next time that he saw Gabriello dive, he imitated the motion by ducking his head, and at the same time losing his footing, slipped gently down, till he not only reached the post, but passed it with his head still under water. When he fairly got out of his depth, still trying whether he could see, it appeared a strange thing to him; for he found he could no longer get his breath, and he endeavoured in vain to fight his way up again, the water pouring in at his mouth and ears, at his nose and eyes, in such a way that he could see nothing. In short, the current at length catching him, bore him away in perfect amazement, and he was too far gone to cry out for help. Gabriello was in the mean time employed in diving

down into a large hole he had discovered near the stakes, full of fish, which he was handing into his net with the greatest alacrity; while his poor friend and patron was already more than half dead, having now come up and gone down again for the third time, and at the fourth he rose no more.

Just at this moment, Gabriello, with a prodigious draught, again appeared, and turning round, with a joyous face to look at Lazzaro, what was his surprise and terror when he found his master was gone! Gazing round with the hope of perceiving him somewhere, he only found his clothes, just as he had left them. In the utmost alarm he ran again to the water, and in a short time discovered his body thrown by the current on the opposite bank. He swam to the place, and on perceiving that his good patron was quite cold and lifeless, he stood for some moments like a statue, overpowered with grief and terror, without knowing how to act. In the first place he was afraid, if he published the tidings of his death, of being accused of having drowned him, to plunder him of his money, an idea which threw him into such alarm, that covering his face with his hands, he stood buried in profound grief and reflection. At length he suddenly uttered an ex-

clamation of joy, as the thought rushed into his mind, "I am safe, I am safe; there are no witnesses of the accident, and I know what I will do: it is the hour when luckily every body is asleep." With these words he thrust the nets and the fish into his great basket, and taking the dead body of Lazzaro on his shoulders, heavy as it was, he placed it among some wet reeds hard by the shore. He then bound the nets round his poor friend's arms, and again bearing him to the water, he contrived to fasten the strings in such a way round one of the deepest stakes, that they could with difficulty be withdrawn, giving the body the appearance of having been thus entangled while fishing. He then assumed his patron's attire, and got even into his very shoes, and sat down quietly on the bank, resolved to try what fortune would do for him. His strong resemblance to his deceased friend, if successful, would now not only save his life, but make it ever after, as he believed, most happy and comfortable. As the hour seemed now arrived, with equal skill and courage, he entered upon the dangerous experiment, and began to call out lustily for help in the person of poor Lazzaro: "Help! help, good people, or the poor fisherman will be drowned! Oh, he comes up no more!" and

with this, he roared out tremendously. The miller was the first man who reached the spot; but numbers of people were gathering on all sides to learn what could possibly cause such an insufferable noise. Gabriello continued to bellow, even some time after they arrived, the better to counterfeit his patron, weeping the whole time, as he told his tale; how the poor fisherman had dipped, and brought up fish so often; but the last time he had stopped nearly an hour under water, and having waited for him in vain, he began to be afraid he was coming up no more. The people inquiring, with a smile at his simplicity, whereabouts it was, he pointed out the spot, on which the miller, who was a great friend of Gabriello's, began to strip, and plunged into the river. And there, sure enough, as he believed, he found his friend Gabriello caught in his own net, and entangled fast by his neck and heels to the unlucky stake.

"Heaven have mercy on us!" cried the miller, "here he is, poor Gabriello, poor Gabriello! quite drowned in his own entangled net;" using his utmost efforts at the same time to loosen it from about the stake. Such were the lamentations of Gabriello's friends on hearing this, that he could scarcely refrain from betraying himself. Two more threw themselves into the water to assist the miller, and at length,

with some difficulty, they fished the body out. The arms and legs were all entangled in the net, and his relations in their indignation tore the unlucky cords to tatters. The tidings of his death being spread abroad, a priest immediately attended, and the body was borne upon a bier to the nearest church, where it was laid out, in order to be recognized by Gabriello's friends. His disconsolate widow, accompanied by other relations, bewailing him and her children, now hastened to the spot. Believing the body to be his, a scene of tender affliction ensued. After beating her breast and tearing her hair, she sat down and wept with her little children, while every one around, and above all the real Gabriello, could not restrain their tears. So overpowered, indeed, was he by his feelings, that pulling his poor patron's hat over his brows, and hiding his face in his pocket-handkerchief, he addressed his wife before all the people, in a hoarse and piteous voice: "Come, good woman, do not despair, do not cry so. I will provide for you, and take care both of you and your children; the poor man lost his life in trying to amuse me, and I shall not forget it. He was a clever fisherman; but leave off crying, I tell you I will provide for you. So go home, and go in peace, for you shall want for nothing while I live, and when I die I

will leave you what is handsome;" and this he ended with a kind of growl, intended to express his concern both for her and the deceased fisherman. For these words he was highly applauded by all the people present, while the imaginary widow, somewhat consoled by his promises, was conveyed back by her relations to her own dwelling. But Gabriello in his new character immediately marched and took possession of Lazzaro's house, walking in exactly as he had often observed his poor friend was wont to do, without noticing any one. He went into a richly furnished chamber, overlooking some beautiful gardens, and taking the keys out of his deceased patron's pockets, he began to search the trunks and boxes, where he found other lesser keys, which admitted him to all the treasures and valuables in the place. It was a storehouse of wealth indeed, for it not only contained the fortunes of the deceased doctor and other relations of Lazzaro, to the amount of several thousand florins of gold; but was equally rich in jewels and plate. At the sight of these, Gabriello repressed with difficulty loud exclamations of rapture and surprise, and he sat down to devise fresh means of supporting his title to Lazzaro's estates. With this view, being perfectly acquainted with his late friend's character, he went down about supper time, uttering

the most strange and wild exclamations of grief. The two servants of the house, who had heard of the fatal accident, and the cause of it, ran hastily to his relief. But instead of listening to their consolation, he directly ordered six loaves, and a portion of the supper, with two flasks of wine, to be carried to the disconsolate widow across the way. On the return of the domestic, with the poor widow's grateful thanks, Gabriello partook of a light supper, set out in the handsomest style, and without saying a word to any one, shut himself up in his chamber, and went to bed. There he remained until the hour of nine the next morning, in order the better to indulge his reflections and his grief. Though the difference between his voice and language, and those of their former master, was perceptible to his domestics, they attributed it entirely to his violent sorrow for his deceased friend. And the poor widow, finding how well he seemed inclined to keep his word of supporting her and her children, very soon dismissed the condolences of her relations, and retired as usual quietly to rest. The next day Gabriello began to rise at his old friend's usual hour, and though he had now a variety of cares upon his hands, he never permitted the poor widow, Santa, to want for any thing. He imitated his late patron's way of life very exactly,

for he really seemed to have also succeeded to his indolence, which he adopted without an effort. He was still, however, extremely concerned to hear that his wife's grief for his death continued unabated; though he certainly felt flattered by it, and began to think in what way he could console her, and how he could contrive means to marry her again. Feeling not a little puzzled upon the subject, he resolved to go to her house, where he found her, accompanied by one of her cousins; it not being long since the period of his supposed death. Having informed her that he wished to speak to her upon an affair of some importance, her kind relation immediately took his leave, aware of the numerous obligations which her rich neighbour had so charitably conferred upon her. When he had left them, Gabriello closed the door with the same air of familiarity and confidence as formerly, at which the poor woman could not help testifying some surprise, fearful lest he might presume too far upon the services he had rendered her. When Gabriello advanced, taking her little boy by the hand, she drew back timidly, at which action he could not help expressing his admiration of his wife's propriety, in an audible voice, and with a grin of delight. Then taking her by the hand, he spoke to her in his accustomed manner, and she gazed for

a moment doubtfully in his face; while Gabriello, taking his little boy in his arms, tenderly caressed him, saying, "What, boy, is your mother weeping at our good fortune?" and shaking some money in his hand with a triumphant air, he gave it to him, and went on playing with him as usual. But perceiving that his wife was overpowered with a variety of emotions which she could not control, unable longer to disguise the truth, he first fastened the door, and fearful lest any one might overhear the strange story he had to reveal, he drew her into an inner chamber, and there related the whole affair just as it had passed. It is impossible to convey an idea of her surprise and joy, as she hung weeping upon his neck. But they were delicious tears, and her husband kissed them away, with far greater rapture than he had ever before felt: and they sank overpowered with emotion into each other's arms.

It was necessary, however, to use the utmost precaution in retaining the fortune they had so strangely won: and after explaining the plans he had in view, and engaging his wife's promise to keep the matter secret, Gabriello returned to his new house. His wife still affecting to retain her grief for his loss, frequently took care, before all her neighbours, to recommend her poor children to the gen-

tleman's notice, who uniformly treated them with kindness.

The ensuing night he lay broad awake, devising how he might best put his future plans into execution. Having at length resolved, he rose early, and bent his way to the church of Santa Catterina, where he knew a venerable and devout monk, almost worshipped by the good people of Pisa, whose name was Fra Anselmo. He here announced a very strange and important piece of business, respecting which he wished to consult the conscience of the learned friar. The good father carried him into his cell, where Gabriello introduced himself as Lazzaro di Maestro Basilio da Milano, relating at the same time his whole family genealogy, and how he had remained sole heir of the whole property, owing to the late plague. He at last came to the story of poor Gabriello, the fisherman, laying the sole blame of the accident upon himself, in persuading the wretched man to accompany him in a fishing excursion along the Arno. He then proceeded to relate the deplorable circumstances in which he had left his family; and taking into serious consideration the cause of the calamity, he felt it weigh so heavily upon his conscience, that he was resolved at all risks to make every reparation in his power. But what

reparation could be made to a woman, who, however lowly her condition, had fondly loved her husband, except by consoling her for her loss by directing her affections towards another object. "And the truth is," he continued, "I am willing to marry her, and become a father to her children, and then," he continued with the greatest simplicity, "perhaps God will forgive me for the great sin I committed in taking him out a fishing with me." Though the pious father here smiled, it appeared so conscientious a proposal that he did not venture to oppose it, saying, that he would not fail, in this way, to obtain the mercy of heaven upon many of his past sins. Hearing this comfortable doctrine, Gabriello opened his purse-strings, and presented the friar with thirty pieces, observing that he wished the mass of San Gregorio to be sung for three Mondays together, to insure peace to the soul of the deceased fisherman. The venerable monk's eyes brightened at the sight, and he promised mass should be sung the very next Monday. With respect to the projected alliance, he observed to Gabriello, that he rather praised him for his disregard to wealth and nobility in the proposed union. "Make no account of it," he continued; "you will be rich enough in the grace of heaven: we all belong to the same father and the

same mother, and virtue is the only true nobility. I know both her and her parents; you could not do better, for she is born of a good family. So, go home, my good signor, and I will attend you when you please."—"Well, to day, to day, then!" cried Gabriello, as he prepared to depart. "Ah, leave it to me," returned the friar, "and take my blessing with you, my son, and bring the ring in the mean time." Gabriello hastened home, and purchased the ring accordingly, persuading himself there could be no harm in making sure that every thing was quite correct in the difficult circumstances under which he laboured. So, with the consent of all the lady's friends and relations, the marriage was celebrated a second time. Gabriello, in the person of Lazzaro, then conducted his wife to her new house, where a splendid feast was prepared, and all their friends met to receive them. Soon after, Gabriello gradually assuming the manners of a gentleman, dismissed the old maid and man-servant, with liberal gratuities, and set up a handsome equipage and noble establishment. He astonished all Lazzaro's friends with the striking improvement that had taken place in the simpleton's manners, while his wife, Santa, became exceedingly genteel in all her actions. The

twice married pair spent together a tranquil and happy life, and had two sons subsequently born, who, assuming a new family surname, called themselves de' Fortunati; and from these children sprung a race of men renowned both in letters and in arms.

NOVELLA VI.

There was formerly an honest citizen of Florence, known by the name of Guasparri del Calandra, by trade a gold-beater, and a pretty skilful master of his art. He was excessively good-natured, but withal of so thick and heavy an intellect, that he owed his good fortune chiefly to his marriage with a lady who had succeeded to two pleasant farms in the Prato, and two houses in Florence. On this event he shut up his shop, resolving to lead a life of leisure in the country, with only one son, a boy about five years old, and his lady, who promised no further addition to his family. While residing at his villa, he entered into social terms with a gentleman of the name of Scheggia, and through him, with his friends Pilucca, Monaco, and Zoroastro. Delighted with their wit and spirit, for they were all boon companions of the first order, he frequently invited them, or went to sup with them at the residence of Pilucca, in Via Scala, surrounded with pleasant gardens, where during summer they were wont to sup in the open air, under the viny shade. Here Guasparri, having always piqued himself on his delicate knowledge of various wines, as well as on furnishing a sumptuous assort-

ment of them upon occasion, was elected by the joint consent of his companions master of the feast. This he conceived a high honour, and to express his sense of its great dignity and importance, he insisted upon providing and laying in every fresh stock, most assiduously inspecting, for that purpose, the stores of the liquor-merchants, and the first taverns in the city. But while he allowed no wine to be drunk by them but his own, he agreed that they should provide the eatables in equal shares. Of these, the said Scheggia was the caterer, an office which he discharged to the admiration of all his friends, whose powers of deglutition did ample justice to the taste both of Scheggia and his friend. The latter they frequently crowned with vine and ivy, in imitation of the Bacchanalian god, while Zoroastro in his devotion declared, that neither men nor gods had ever discovered the varieties of flavor like his friend Guasparri. All this was extremely agreeable to our hero, who began, for the first time in his life, to conceive himself of some importance, leading the toasts, as well as the conversation, to the most trifling and whimsical topics that could be imagined. The doctrine of witchcraft, incantations, and apparitions, and stories of dead people who had come to life again, were here discussed the whole night through, to

the great edification of the host. But towards midnight Guasparri, though he affected to ridicule the idea of supernatural appearances, began to feel extremely uncomfortable on hearing the awful particulars of each story, and in vain tried to laugh it off, by saying that the dead found quite enough to do to get a living in their own world, without coming back again to trouble us in this. His sly companions, however, had the wit to see through the mask, and were infinitely amused at witnessing his exertions to shake off the fears which too evidently oppressed him. Pilucca's gardens continuing still the scene of their summer amusements, and Guasparri still superintending the wine, it happened that one of the relations of the latter, as if envious of the good fellowship he did not enjoy, began to blame his folly and extravagance in supplying the whole party with wine, while his pretended friends only flattered him to his face, to turn him into a subject of ridicule for all Florence when they left him; and that, in short, he would soon become quite notorious to the whole city for a simpleton as he was. Believing, as usual, every thing that was told him, Guasparri resolved to withdraw from their company, and directly set off home, where he had left his wife, and son, and a single maid-servant, to take care of themselves.

His old friends, waiting dinner for him a long while, began to wonder whither he could have withdrawn himself, and after in vain searching all the likely and all the unlikely places they could think of, they accidentally heard, just as their best wines were getting low, that he was actually gone to live with his family at the villa, a place, where of all others, they least thought of looking for him. They began to be seriously afraid that there was now an end to their usual course of festivity; but our hero in a short time becoming weary of the villa, resolved to return to town, where Pilucca one day accidentally met him walking along the streets of Florence. Joyfully hailing, and shaking him by the hand, Pilucca welcomed him back, observing, as he invited him for the same evening to a feast: "Heavens, how truly rejoiced I am to see you here once more! Where can you have been? I have not had the flavor of good wine in my mouth, nor heard the stave of a good song, since you left us." Guasparri, drawing back, replied that he was sorry he could not come; but on being questioned more narrowly, unable to give any excuse, and longing at the same time to be admitted to their company, he fairly confessed that there was no resisting such an offer—he would come; but that he could not pretend any longer to dictate to

them what wines they ought to drink. Then relating the conversation he had had with his cousin, he declared he had come to the resolution of furnishing no more. His companion, on hearing this, affected to laugh outright, though he really felt little inclination, when he considered the difference it would make, were each of them to furnish his proportion, instead of laying the whole expense of the bottles upon their friend. At the same time, he flattered himself he should soon be able to bring him round to his usual habits. When the party assembled in the evening, Pilucca communicated what had passed between him and Guasparri, to the great dismay of his companions, and they then held a regular council as to how they should proceed. They resolved to receive him with cheerful and happy looks, and soon succeeded so well in flattering him into good humour, that they obtained his company for several successive nights; but finding that they could never bring him to the same liberal way of thinking as formerly, they at length, after repeated trials, came to the resolution of fairly casting him off, declaring that he was no longer worthy of keeping company with gentlemen like themselves.

They deliberated, therefore, on the best method of getting rid of him, by playing him some humo-

rous trick, and fleecing him of his money at the same time in such a way, as to give him no sort of inclination to return. Calculating upon the fears which they suspected he entertained for goblins, especially of such as haunted the churchyards, they proceeded to deliberate in what way they might turn them to good account. The ghostly council accordingly met; and aware that our hero, when visiting certain friends, had to return home in the evening over the bridge of Carraja, in order to reach his own house, situated in Borgo Stella, and that no one slept in the same house, his family being at the villa, they forthwith commenced their operations. There was a certain Signor Meino, a manufacturer, and a great friend of Scheggia's, who resided next door to our hero, and great facility of communication existed between the houses. With some persuasion, Scheggia won over his friend to enter into their designs; and the day being arrived when they were to try the strength of Guasparri's vain boasting and resolution against spirits, they had every thing prepared before evening for the execution of their plot. They were all supping together, and turning the conversation to the proper topic, they dwelt so long and fearfully upon the theory of apparitions, that our friend Guasparri's hair began to bristle up, and he

reflected with dread upon the solitary walk he had before him, ere he reached his beloved home. He would fain have requested one of them to accompany him, at least as far as the bridge, had he not already committed his valour so deeply in the vain boastings he had so long been in the habit of indulging upon the subject. At one time he came to the resolution of staying and sleeping where he was, but when he began to advance excuses for this purpose, Zoroastro, who saw into his design, completely foiled him, by instantly proposing cards, at which our hero had already lost such immense sums, that he started as if he had really seen a ghost. Declaring that he must instantly keep an appointment, he set out, followed quietly at a distance by his wily companions, and took the road by Santa Maria Novella, until he reached the fosse which led straight to the bridge of Carraja. Scheggia now quickened his pace, and running through the Borgo Ognissanti, arrived at the bridge before Guasparri, by this shorter cut, and quickly marshalled his companions, he himself lying hid in the little church of Santo Antonio, on the verge of the Arno, adjoining Santa Trinità.

It happened to be a dark night in September, and agreeably to the orders of Zoroastro and Scheggia, their companions were stationed near the first pil-

lars, each of whom held a long pike in his hand, to which were attached several large white sheets, with a cross upon the summit to resemble arms, and a huge mask of a most diabolical aspect. Two lanterns all on fire served for the eyes, while the mouth grinned with a horrible smile, flaming with another lantern, which showed off the long sharp teeth to advantage. A long flat nose, sharp chin, and an immense slouched hat, completed the terrific figure, a sight of which would have been almost sufficient to put to flight the most doughty heroes of romance, not excepting the mad Orlando himself. Such was the ambuscade that lay glaring in secret, awaiting the arrival of the unfortunate Guasparri. They were all to rise up at the same moment, just as he passed these horrid apparitions, addressing each other by the name of Cuccobeoni, in order more effectually to alarm their hapless victim with their voices, who at length cautiously approached the bridge, using his utmost efforts at the same time to banish the idea of spectres from his mind. A low whistle from Scheggia was now the signal for the apparitions to appear, when they gradually rose from the earth, spreading larger and larger till they assumed their full terrific dimensions. Guasparri had just got half over the bridge; some of the apparitions stood before and

some behind him; and his little strength and courage failing him together, he turned round each way, but had no power left to escape on either hand. The next moment the whole Arno seemed to teem with spectres, as tall in our poor hero's opinion as the church steeples, and exceeding the number, as he afterwards asserted, of thirty thousand demons, whose diabolical features now rivetted him to the spot. "The Lord help me! the Lord help me!" he exclaimed in a doleful voice, but had no power to move. Soon observing that they were approaching as if to gather round him, and believing that he should be instantly devoured, he cried out in a still louder voice: "The Lord help me to pray! the Lord help me to run! I will run in the name of the Lord!" and away he wildly rushed through the midst of the apparitions, never once staying to breathe, or to look behind him, until he had arrived at the house of Pilucca, where he knocked with such violence, as nearly to burst open the door. Here his friends were many of them assembled to welcome him back, having understood from their companions on the bridge, that they might expect him in a short time, and that they must do all in their power to restore his suspended faculties. He threw himself upon a couch, unable for some time to recover breath; he

could not utter a word, and he appeared on the point of swooning away, when they applied the necessary restoratives.

The moment Guasparri had disappeared, Scheggia despatched his companions to Meino's house, in order to secure the fruits of their adventure, in the manner we shall soon recount; while he himself hastened to Pilucca's, where he found his friend Guasparri already so far recovered, as to be giving the most strange and unintelligible description of the wonderful and appalling scenes through which he had passed. His audience, by affecting to discredit the truth of the relation, threw him into the utmost rage, when Scheggia, walking quietly into the room from an inner chamber, as if he had remained there the whole of the evening, persuaded our hero to begin his story anew. Still he could not be persuaded, in spite of Guasparri's swearing that such was the fact, that the apparitions had literally appeared to him; and the latter was thrown into the greatest despair, when Scheggia, persisting in his unbelief, declared that he only meant to make fools of them all, and challenged Guasparri at the same time to accompany him to the bridge. Declining this offer, however, Guasparri contented himself with pointing out the exact situation in which the spirits

attacked him, when both banks of the Arno were covered with their troops, clothed in white uniform, with faces of fire, and heads as black as Erebus, all rushing on him at once to make him their prisoner. But when his friends pretended to return from a visit to the bridge, without discovering any remains of the apparitions, they all with one consent began to upbraid him for his folly and cowardice, declaring that he must have drunk his senses away, and that he must be delirious to think of coming to interrupt them over their cards, with such tales as these. They then sat down again quietly to play, while Guasparri was revolving in his mind how he could contrive to obtain the escort of the nightly watch as far as his own house. The moment he heard them passing, the moon having now risen, he sallied forth, and offered them a handsome reward if they would see him safe over the bridge. As they approached it, he seized the officer more closely by the arm, shutting his eyes, to avoid the sight of the same distracting objects as he passed along.

On reaching his house, he felt some qualms of fear at the idea of sleeping there alone, his family residing at the villa, and he would gladly have gone further, to the house of one of his relations, had not the night been so very far advanced. It was his

custom during that season, to go to rest in a room upon the ground floor, which Meino, his neighbour, had been prevailed upon by Scheggia to hang entirely with black drapery, borrowed from the Osso company, adorned with emblems adapted to sacred occasions, such as death's heads, crosses, and remnants of mortality of every description. Round the room were placed many large wax candles, such as are used at burials, casting a fearful and glaring light; while in the midst of all was placed a bier covered with a carpet, on which lay the resemblance of a corpse, with orange flowers and rosemary strewed all round. A crucifix was fixed over the head, and two wax lights at each side, for the convenience of those who might wish to contemplate the features more narrowly. Guasparri proceeded to take possession as usual of his own apartment, and as he opened the door beheld a scene which might have startled a stouter philosopher than himself. With his eyes fixed upon the whole apparatus of mortality, he stood fascinated to the spot, and when he attempted to retreat, he could proceed no further than the door, where he fell, overpowered with horror, once more upon his knees, his head turned slightly back to ascertain whether the dead man were following to show him out. But though he could not speak, he uttered an inward

prayer, which at length endued him with so much strength, as to enable him to rise up from his knees, and with another effort of despair, he got through the door, and locking it eagerly after him to prevent pursuit, rushed out of the house. He then once more took to flight, with the intention of again seeking the residence of the very enemies who had thus cruelly invaded his repose. And as the greater fear is always apt to remove the impression of a slighter, our hero in this his extremity, no longer regarding the apparitions on the bridge, which had lately inspired him with so much awe, pressed valiantly forward until he reached the very house he had not long since left. Here was a fresh scene of pleasure for his malicious companions, who for a long time permitted him to knock in vain. At length Pilucca made his appearance, exclaiming in an angry tone: "What, are you here again? Will you never leave off these mad tricks of yours? What do you mean by this conduct?" "Oh, help, help! have mercy on me, good gentlemen," was our hero's reply. "My house is full of spirits; and I think all the demons in Tartarus must this night have broken loose. Oh, such a night!" and he immediately proceeded with a fresh account of his adventures. Such was the violence of his gesticulations and his perturbations, that his wicked

MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARAS

friends at length consented, yielding to his vehement entreaties, to accompany him home, where he vowed he would fully satisfy them in regard to the truth of his statements. In the mean time, however, another party had been busily employed in removing the fearful preparations, which had so much disturbed the equanimity of our hero's soul; and before he returned home with his fresh escort, the whole house had resumed its usual state, while the wary authors of the change had already taken refuge in the dwelling of Meino. "Why do you tremble so?" cried Zoroastro, as our poor friend laid his hand upon his own door, and then drew back; "really, if you had not played us this trick once before to-night, we should almost be inclined to believe you; but you are not the man to impose upon us as you think." To this, Guasparri, bidding him enter before him, replied, that he would forfeit his eyes if he had spoken a single word more than the truth, which they would find to their cost when they ventured in. "Neither your eyes nor your head will be of any use to us," returned Zoroastro; "but if you are serious, pledge us this diamond ring upon it, and two dozen bottles of your Monte Pulciano to encourage us. The truth is, we do not believe that you have seen any thing either here or at the bridge; but pledge us

the wine, and keep your head upon your own shoulders, and we will encounter the ghosts." To this the poor wretch consented; feeling assured that they would find a pretty warm reception from the visible and invisible spirits which swarmed about the room. So he put the diamond ring into their hands, worth at least thirty gold ducats, at the same time challenging each of the party to advance. Scheggia at first drew back, as if afraid, saying: "Suppose your house should have been robbed in your absence. Do you go first," he continued, addressing Pilucca. "No, do you; do you;" cried each in their turn, which threw Guasparri into greater consternation than ever. "It is so very dark," added Monaco; "I dread going in the dark into a place where there may be thieves." "Well, here is a lantern," rejoined another; "take it, and forward, in the name of heaven." So Monaco pretended to be obliged to advance, and the others followed, Guasparri bringing up the rear with evident fears of the event. When he laid his hand on the door of the haunted chamber, Monaco paused; on which a thrill ran through our hero's frame, and his hair began to bristle up. Seeing Zoroastro about to press forward, he held him back by the skirt of the coat, whispering: "It is not safe; let us go back;" when suddenly opening the room-

door, and pushing him forwards, they burst into a loud laugh, declaring that the wager was won. Every thing stood in its usual place, to the no small surprise and confusion of our hero, who cast his eyes in every direction, in search of the demons, the sulphur tapers, the death's heads, and the dead man; but every thing had disappeared. "Oh, thou villain, thou impostor!" they all cried out, "we never suspected, Guasparri, that you could have used us thus. One would have thought from your looks, you were leading us into the infernal pit; every thing here is just as it was; it is really too bad; and yet you pretend to be shocked and surprised. We shall be compelled to decline your acquaintance: this is carrying matters quite too far."

It is impossible to do justice to our hero during this scene; he knew not whether he was really awake or in a dream; he raved and he rolled his eyes, but took not the least notice of what they said. To restore him a little to his wits, his friends began to entreat him, that as he had succeeded so well in his scheme of imposing upon them, and rousing them from their beds, he would at least not think of carrying the affair further, and exposing them to the laughter of the whole city on the ensuing day. "We have secured the ring and the wine, however; that part of

the joke is ours, so we are content: and if you please," continued Scheggia, observing that our hero remained far from easy in his mind, "if you please, I will stay with you here all night." Though he gratefully accepted his friend's offer, he never closed his eyes during that night, dwelling on the scenes which had so strongly impressed themselves upon his imagination. The next morning he rose early, and set out to join his family at the villa, desirous of trying what a change of scene would effect in removing the unpleasant associations of the previous night. He had nearly, however, fallen a victim to this unfeeling and injudicious prank on the part of his old friends; for on the third day he was in so violent a fever, that the physicians almost despaired of his life. They might be said to have flayed him alive, for during his convalescence, he really cast away his old skin; nor was it only in this respect that he underwent a change: he no longer left his family, and a blessed regeneration was the consequence of the frolic of his false friends.

On their side, the ensuing day was a day of triumph and festivity; they laughed and feasted at the expense of their unfortunate companion; but such triumphs, and such follies usually end in bitterness and tears; the fate of their authors being still more

pitiable than that of the victims they pursue. They even attempted to get the credulous Guasparri into their snares, and to betray him once more, in which they would most likely have succeeded, had it not been for the kind relation who interfered in his favour on a former occasion, and who now persuaded him to dispose of his house in town, and to attach himself to rural pursuits.

NOVELLA IX.

I RECOLLECT that our friend Giovan-Francesco del Bianco frequently related a story, and he was every way qualified to tell a good story, of a certain Brancazio Malespini, á young Florentine, who happened, like most youths of his age, to be deeply enamoured of a beautiful girl, residing near the gate of San Niccolo, at Ricorboli. She was the daughter of a gentleman whose property consisted in lime and brick kilns, the superintendence of which occupied so much of his attention, as to leave the lovers a great deal of time to themselves. The father being often engaged at his works until very late in the night, the young Malespini, on these occasions, was accustomed to set out on the approach of twilight, passing eagerly through the little wicket near the gate of San Niccolo, to avoid observation, and joining his fair young mistress about the same time that her father took his leave; the latter having no less confidence in the honour and integrity of his young friend, than in the prudence of his daughter. On his return home, the lover was accustomed to pass along the banks of the Arno, and proceeding through the great gate and

along the walls of the mansion of justice, approached the gate of Santa Croce, where he again passed the little wicket, and entered into Florence; and then dwelling upon the agreeable incidents of the day, he there sought repose.

Having in this way taken leave one evening of his beloved, and musing upon her perfections by moonlight as he followed the windings of the river, his reverie was somewhat disagreeably disturbed by a voice which seemed to proceed from the place of public execution, just opposite to him. *Ora pro eo, ora pro eo!* was repeated pretty audibly several times; and on turning his eyes towards the gallows, he beheld three or four figures, apparently dancing in the air, and it being now the "witching hour of night," our lover testified no sort of pleasure at the view. He was quite at a loss to discover whether the forms were fanciful or real; when just as the moon went behind a cloud, he again heard the *Ora pro eo.* While in some doubt how he should proceed, the light of the moon again broke from behind the clouds, and he imagined he saw another figure dancing upon the scaffold, far above the rest. But our lover being possessed of great courage, and holding the theory of demons and apparitions in supreme contempt, on hearing for the third time the *Ora pro eo,* exclaimed

in a tone of self-accusation: "What then, shall I be such a coward as to go away without ascertaining the meaning of this, and ever afterwards indulge doubt and fear upon the subject?" He had no sooner uttered this valiant speech, than he advanced boldly towards the gallows, and began to mount the ladder. Now, unluckily for our hero, it so happened, that about that time there was a poor maniac girl in Florence, who was in the habit of wandering towards evening, beyond the confines of the city, and on this occasion she had directed her steps to this seat of final justice. It being now harvest time, she had gathered several large pumpkins in the surrounding fields, and performed the office of executioner upon them, suspending them by the heads, with the huge sprouts hanging down in the shape of legs; and having duly turned them off like an executioner, she left them thus quivering to the breeze. She had been amusing herself with observing their motions, just as Malespini made his approach; and was preparing to turn off another of her pumpkins, when, suddenly stopping, she cried out in a horrid voice to our poor hero, who had ascended about half way up: "Stop, stop; and I will hang you too;" and the next moment, running down the ladder like a cat, our hero was seized with such a sudden fit of terror at the

sight, that, believing it must at least be some demon in disguise, he relinquished his hold, and losing his presence of mind, fell down to the ground. The maniac was not long in descending after him, and desirous of adding him to the number of her victims, she endeavoured to lift him up, with the intention of immediately hanging him by the neck. Finding him somewhat too heavy, she unlaced her apron strings, and binding them round his throat, she dragged him in this manner towards the foot of the ladder, where fastening him very securely, she left him to his fate, pursuing fresh adventures wherever fortune might choose to lead. Daylight at length appeared, when some peasants, proceeding to the city, perceived the strange exhibition, which the whimsical lady had left behind her, and on approaching nearer, they descried the gibbet adorned with flowers, and at its foot our poor hero tied by the neck and heels, and still in a deep swoon. Tidings of this affair having reached the city, numbers of people assembled, and the lover, to all appearance dead, was released from his very disagreeable situation. No one, however, could give any account of the strange apparition of the mock culprits, which were observed swinging by their heads; nor was enabled to throw any light on the catastrophe of the unfortunate lover. His father and

friends were in a short time upon the spot, and amidst tears and lamentations caused the body to be transported into the adjoining church, and placed in the cell of one of the priests, where an examination took place. The physician, finding some degree of warmth still lingering about the heart, declared there was a chance that he might still survive, and ordering a litter, caused him to be conveyed into one of the warmest apartments in his father's house. There, after making use of the strongest applications, and bathing the body in malmsey wine and vinegar, to restore suspended animation, his friends had at length the pleasure of observing him gradually recover. But more than an hour elapsed before he could utter a word, and he then began to talk at random, and was unable to recollect where he was. His physician then bled him very copiously, which though it restored him to his senses, left him in a lingering state for several weeks. The sudden alarm, however had not only changed the colour of his hair and skin, but he actually lost them, nor did he ever afterwards assume the same appearance, or entirely recover from the effects of the mad lady's unceremonious attack. His case gave rise to a good deal of disputation amongst the faculty and his own friends; for such was the wild and unsettled expression of his

countenance, that many of the latter were at a loss to recognize him. The same appearance is known by physicians to occur in certain stages of various diseases, and they attributed it entirely to the sudden impulse of fear, when the maniac girl proposed, in so unexpected a manner, to cut short his thread of existence, and had so nearly executed her threat.

Yet the cause would have remained a mystery to this day, had not the same lady returned about sunset to take down the bodies she had suspended; when she was discovered in the act, and very properly put upon her trial, in order to ascertain the real facts. Malespini, however, could scarcely be persuaded that he had not really seen something more than mortal, and that some horrid necromancer had not suspended those fearful forms by the neck, for some diabolical purposes.

FIRST EVENING, NOVELLA V.*

No sooner had the lovely Galatea brought her very pleasing and applauded little story to a conclusion, than Leandro, looking round upon us with a mild and joyous air, in his turn began: Since it is my fate, fair ladies, and you, enamoured youths, to recount, under the feigned name you have given me, (for, alas! he who once bore it breathed his spirit on the cold waves, while struggling to reach the haven of his love); I must even, however unwillingly, persevere in rehearsing the sad mischances which have befallen such as believed themselves the happiest of

* This very tragic story has long been a favourite subject of imitation, no less with the Italians, than with the writers of other nations. Among the dramatic pieces, however, which appear to have been formed upon it, there is, certainly, no single production which can at all compete, in point of richness of poetry and dramatic pathos, with that presented to us by a distinguished writer of our own age and country. The "Fazio" of Professor Milman, though one of his earliest efforts, gave ample promise of his maturer powers. It would be fruitless to attempt here to point out the numerous improvements and ornaments which the English author has judiciously blended with his drama, and which confer upon his work the merit of an original composition.

lovers. Of this the following tale will afford but too grievous an example, filling your gentle hearts with dismay as we proceed, and from the eyes of beauty drawing unbidden tears. And what, though the scene of sorrow belonged neither to Greece, nor prouder Rome, neither to those of lofty lineage nor of royal stock, it was such as may serve to shew, that tragic terrors will sometimes lay desolate the humblest hearths, as well as strike the proud and golden palaces of kings. It may shew too, that a single woman, neither born a princess nor bred a queen, will suffice, when scorned, to bring down woful ruin upon herself and her whole family.

Listen to me then kindly, while I tell you, that in the annals of Pisa is found the name of Guglielmo Grimaldi, who came to settle in Pisa from the confines of Genoa. He was then a youth of about two-and-twenty, with very few resources, and living in a hired apartment; yet with saving habits, and some ability, he was at length enabled to lend little sums of money upon usury. And in this way, by hoarding his gains, while he spent little, he became in no very long time a rich man, without losing his desire of adding to his wealth. He lived alone, and with the most unremitting diligence and secrecy, amassed and concealed his increasing stores, until growing old at

length, he found himself in possession of thousands, of which he would not have parted with a single crown, to save the life of a friend, or to redeem the whole world from eternal punishment. On this account he was detested by all his fellow citizens, and paid dearly enough for it in the end. Having one evening supped out with some of his miserly acquaintance, he was returning late to his own house, when he was assaulted by an unknown hand, and feeling himself wounded in the breast, he cried out and fled for help. Just at this moment came on a terrific storm of hail, and wind, and thunder, which increased his distress, and compelled him to look out for shelter. Becoming faint from the loss of blood, he ran into the first house that he found open, belonging to one Fazio, a goldsmith, attracted by the blaze of a large fire, at which he, the said Fazio, was making chemical experiments, having for some time past devoted the whole of his earnings to these pursuits, attempting to convert the dull metals of lead and tin into fine silver or gold. For this purpose had he now made so glorious an illumination, that he was compelled to open the door to admit air, while he melted down his metals; but hearing the sound of footsteps, he turned round, and beheld Guglielmo Grimaldi, the miser. "What are you doing here,

friend," he inquired, " at such an hour, and in such a night as this?" " Alas!" answered the miser, " I am ill; I have been attacked and wounded; I know not why, nor by whom;" and he had no sooner uttered these words, than he sat down and died upon the spot.

Fazio was greatly surprised and alarmed on beholding him fall dead at his feet, and opening his bosom to receive air, he tried to recal him to life, believing at first that the poor miser was dying of pure exhaustion and inanition, by denying himself food. But on discovering the wound in his breast, and finding that his pulse no longer beat, he concluded that his visitor had really departed this life. Running to the door, he was about to alarm the neighbourhood, when hearing the terrific raging of the storm, he again drew back, and sought refuge in his house. Now his wife Pippa, and twin boys, happened just at this time to be on a visit to his father-in-law, who was likewise about to take his leave of the world. Instead of calling a physician, then, he suddenly changed his measures, and closed the door: examining next the body of the deceased, he found only four florins in his purse. Then, hid in a heap of old rags, he discovered a great bunch of keys, which from their appearance, belonged to the house

and chambers, the chests and strong boxes, of the miser; who, if report were true, had hoarded up immense wealth, especially in ready cash, secured in his own house.

The moment the idea flashed across Fazio's mind, being of a keen and penetrating genius, he determined to turn it to his own account, and to aim a bold stroke at fortune, whatever were the event. "Why not hasten," he said, "to his strong-hold at once? I am sure to find it in his house, without a living creature near to say me nay. Why not transport it quietly, I say, into my own dwelling? I think no one will hinder me, such a night as it is, thundering as if the sky would fall! Besides, it is past midnight, and every living soul is either sheltering or asleep. I am alone here too, and the assassin of the poor miser must, by this time I think, have taken to flight, without stopping to see where he took refuge. So, if I can only keep my own counsel, who will ever suspect that Grimaldi the miser ran into my house thus grievously wounded, and died? This is surely then an unlooked for blessing; and were I to go about, telling the real truth, who knows whether I should be believed? People might say I had robbed and murdered him, and I should infallibly be taken and put to the question; and how should I be able to

clear myself? I dread to encounter the ministers of justice, for most probably I should never come alive out of their hands. What therefore will be the best? Why, Fortune is said to aid the bold; bold then will I be, and try to rescue myself at once from a lot of penury and pain." Saying these words, he thrust the keys into his bosom, and throwing a fur cloak over his shoulders, his face half buried in a huge slouched hat, he issued forth with a dark lantern in his hand, offering his bosom to the pelting of the pitiless storm with a secure and joyous air. Arriving at the miser's house, that stood at no great distance, he seized two of the largest keys, and soon made good his entrance; then advancing at once to the most secret chamber he could find, he gained admittance by double keys, and beheld a large chest, which after much difficulty he succeeded in opening. This contained others, which were equally well secured, and which he had still more difficulty in unlocking; but what treasures opened upon his view, when his task was completed! One contained all kinds of gold rings, chains, and jewels, with other ornaments, the most massy and valuable in their nature. In another were bags almost bursting with gold ducats, all regularly numbered and parcelled. Fazio, overpowered with joy, relinquished the bags filled with

chains and jewels, saying, "As these may perhaps be recognized, I will stick to the solid gold." Having secured the last then under his arm, he departed, with the keys in his belt, towards his own house, without meeting a single person by the way; such were the pealing thunders, and the flashes of terrific light, which redoubled the terrors of the storm. Fazio, however, reached his house, and having secured the treasure, changed his dress; and being stout and active, he took the dead body of the miser in his arms, and bore it into his cellar. There he proceeded to make, in the floor, an excavation sufficiently large to contain his remains, into which, dressed exactly as he was, with the keys of all his treasures in his pocket, Fazio now thrust the body at least six feet below the earth, and covering it up, he fixed the whole firmly down with certain pieces of lime and tiles, in such a way that no one could perceive the place had been at all disturbed. Having thus disposed of the old miser, he proceeded very leisurely to count over the bags of money, to which he had thus become the heir; and such was the sudden blaze of gold that opened on his eyes, that it was with difficulty he could support the sight. Each bag contained exactly three thousand ducats, as it had been marked, which he deposited in a large chest

of drawers, secured by a secret lock. His next care was to consume the trunk and bags in which he had brought the treasure, in the great fire prepared for the transmutation of his metals: and to these he added his crucibles, his bellows, and his base metals, having no further use for them; and having thus completed his labours, he went to rest.

By this time the storm had abated, and it was already day-break; Fazio therefore continued to sleep, and recruit his exhausted strength, until near vespers. He then rose, and went as far as the piazza, and upon the exchange, in order to learn whether there were any reports yet afloat in regard to the disappearance of the deceased, but he heard nothing either that day or the following. On the third day, however, the miser being no longer seen about his usual affairs, people began to make remarks, more especially when they saw his house shut up, suspecting some evil must have befallen him. Several of his friends, with whom he had last been in company, then made their appearance, relating every thing they knew; but no further intelligence could in any way be elicited. Upon this the court issued an order that his dwelling should be forcibly entered, where every thing was found apparently as he had left it, to the surprise of the spectators, and the whole of

his property was taken possession of in the name of the government. Books, writings, jewels, and furniture, every thing was found as it ought to be, in such a way as to preclude the idea of any attempt at robbery. Advertisements, however, were immediately issued, offering high rewards for the production of his person, either dead or alive. All inquiries were in vain; and though the subject excited considerable noise and alarm, nothing whatever transpired. At the end of three months, the government, being at war with Genoa, and no relatives advancing their claims, the whole of Grimaldi's goods were confiscated for the use of the state; but it was considered an extraordinary circumstance that there was no appearance of ready money.

Fazio in the mean while continued quiet and unmolested, rejoiced to perceive how well the affair went off, and leading a happy life with his wife and family, who were now returned to him. To them he did not venture to breathe a syllable of his good fortune; and had he fortunately persisted in this resolution, he would have avoided the utter downfal and ruin of his family. For the affair had already begun to be forgotten, gradually dying away for ever, and Fazio had given out that he was about to take a journey into France, for the purpose of

disposing of several bars of silver which he had recently made; a report ridiculed by many who were aware that he had already thrown away his time, his labour, and money, in forging the precious metals, while his friends strongly dissuaded him from leaving the place, observing that he might carry on his experiments at Pisa as well as at Paris. But our goldsmith had adopted his plan, very well knowing that he had plenty of good silver to dispose of; though pretending that he had not money enough for his journey, he mortgaged a little farm for one hundred florins, half of which he took with him, and left the other half for his wife. He then took his passage in a vessel to Marseilles, deaf to all the tears and entreaties of his wife, who besought him not to throw away the last of their little substance, and abandon her and her little ones to penury and to woe. "When," she said, "were we happier or better, than when you pursued your own trade, bringing us daily enough for all our wants? Leave us not then to solitude and despair!" Fazio, tenderly soothing her, promised on his return to throw such a golden harvest into her lap, as would console her for all past sufferings; but still in vain. "For," she continued, "if all this fine silver really exist, it will surely be as valuable here as in France; but I fear you want

to desert us for ever; and when once these fifty ducats are spent, what will become of me, wretch that I am? Alas, must I go begging with these helpless little ones? Must I lose you, and be left to solitude and tears?" Her husband, who loved her most affectionately, unable to behold her affliction, determined to acquaint her with his good fortune, and kissing her tenderly, he took her one day after dinner into the chamber where he had concealed his newly acquired wealth, and related to her the particulars that had occurred. He then exhibited the whole of the riches he possessed, bags of ducats, silver and gold without end; and such was the astonishment and delight of his now happy wife, that she flung her arms in an extasy of pleasure round his neck, and weeping, begged forgiveness for all the complaints and reproaches she had used. Insisting upon her promise of secrecy, Fazio then acquainted her with his future plans, explaining how shortly he meant to return to her, and what a joyful and uninterrupted course of happiness would thenceforward be theirs. She no longer objected to his departure; but taking a tender farewell, bade him to think of her, and hasten as soon as possible his return.

The next morning, accordingly, having well se-

cured the valuable metals he was taking along with him, double locked and barred, and leaving a large portion of his treasures with his wife, he went on board, accompanied by the regrets and reproaches of all his friends, in which his wife, the better to conceal her feelings, affected to join. Indeed the whole city united in ridiculing his enterprise, and some who had known him in his better days, expressed their opinion that he ought to be taken care of, for that he was certainly inclined to run mad. Others said, that they had long been aware what would be the consequence, and he would very soon share the fate of his mad predecessors in the accursed art of alchemy, that ruined, instead of enriching its followers. In spite of all, however, Fazio set sail, and with prosperous breezes, soon arrived at Marseilles, taking care by the way to throw the whole of his chemical apparatus into the sea, reserving only the more valuable articles he had obtained from the miser's house, with which he landed, and proceeded with the carriers as far as Lyons. In a few days after, he emptied the contents of his money-bags, depositing a large sum at one of the first banks, for which he received letters of exchange on Pisa, some at the house of Lanfranchi, and others at that of Gualandi; after which he sat down to write to his wife, acquainting

her that he had disposed of his silver, and intended shortly to return to Pisa. This letter the lady shewed to her father, as well as to the rest of Fazio's friends and relations, some of whom expressed themselves much surprised, while others declared that he was a ruined man, the truth of which would speedily appear. Soon after, having received his letters of credit, Fazio left Lyons for Marseilles, and thence taking ship for Leghorn, he had the pleasure, in a short time, of again beholding his wife and children. Embracing them again and again, he declared that he had succeeded beyond his utmost expectations, while the tidings quickly spread among his acquaintance, that he had returned home, rich with the products of his metals. He lost no time in presenting his letters of credit, on which he received nine thousand gold ducats, which were immediately sent to his house, exciting the joy and congratulations of all his relatives and friends.

Thus finding himself one of the richest men in his trade, and with the credit of having realized his fortune by his own ingenious experiments, Fazio began to think of living in a more splendid manner, and of sharing some of his happiness with his friends. In the first place, therefore, he bought an estate, and then a handsome house, besides making several other rich

purchases; and investing his money in such advantageous concerns as offered, he soon assumed the manners and establishment of a prince. He added to the number of his domestics, and set up two equipages, the one for himself, and the other for his lady; his sons were distinguished for the richness of their apparel; and he continued to live on the happiest terms with his wife, enjoying together the luxuries and pleasures which they had at command. Pippa, to whom such a life was wholly new, became somewhat vain of the change, and was in the habit of inviting her acquaintance to witness it, among whom was an old lady, with her fair daughter, whom she invited to come and stay some time with her. Fazio, to whom she said that they would be of use to her in a variety of ways, was induced to give his consent, happy to perceive that they assisted his wife in the cares of her establishment, and that they all lived on the best terms together.

But fortune, the constant enemy of any long continued enjoyment and content, was preparing to change the colour of their fate, and turn this summer sweetness and glory of their days, into the chilling winter of sorrow and despair. For it was the cruel lot of Fazio to become enamoured of the young charms of the fair Maddelena, the daughter of their guest;

and such was his continued and violent passion, that he at length succeeded, by the most consummate art, in leading her from the paths of innocence. Their intercourse continued for some time unknown to his poor wife, and he conferred on his unhappy victim the most lavish proofs of his regard. But as they became bolder with impunity, the unsuspicious Pippa could not, at length, fail to be aware of the truth, and displayed the indignation of her feelings on the subject in no very gentle terms. She reproached her fair guest with still more bitterness, and one day took occasion, in Fazio's absence, to drive her with the utmost fury and opprobrium from her house. Fazio, on returning home, was greatly incensed at these proceedings, and continued, with the same infatuation, to lavish the same favours upon the young Maddelena as before. On this account, scenes of the most cruel and distressing nature were continually occurring between him and his wife; the demon of jealousy had taken possession of her bosom, and family peace and love were thenceforward banished alike from their bed and board. It was in vain that Fazio now attempted to soothe or to subdue her irritated feelings. She spurned his divided affection, and she met his threats with still more violent passion, treating them with merited indignation and

contempt. In order to avoid these reproaches, her husband went to one of his villas, at some distance, whither he invited his young mistress, and continued to lead the same abandoned course of life, while his wife remained plunged in the profoundest wretchedness and despair. These feelings, however, were soon absorbed in rage and jealousy, when she found, after some months, that her husband did not return, and was lavishing still greater proofs of tenderness and favour upon her rival. Thus dwelling with ceaseless anxiety and pain upon one hateful idea, the sense of her wrongs became too great to bear, and in a short time she came to the resolution of accusing her faithless and abandoned husband to the state, by revealing the transaction which had led to his sudden elevation and prosperity. And this appearing the only resource she had left to revenge her injuries upon the authors of them, without further warning or consultation, she proceeded alone, to consult a magistrate, who holding an office similar to that of the Council of Eight in our own city, took down her deposition, comprehending every thing she knew relative to the affairs of her husband. She, moreover, directed them to the exact spot where the remains of the miser had been buried, in the cellar of their former house, and where the officers of justice accord-

ingly found them. Then still retaining her in custody, the magistrate despatched the captain of the band to the residence of her husband, where they found him enjoying himself in the society of his fair Maddelena. Immediately seizing him as a prisoner of the state, they conducted him back to Pisa, overwhelmed with the most abject despair; and when brought up for examination, he refused to utter a syllable. But his wife being ordered to appear against him, he cried out with a loud voice, at the sight of her, "This is justice, indeed!" and then turning towards her, he added: "My too great affection for you has brought me to this;" and, taking one of the magistrates aside, he freely revealed to him the truth of the affair, exactly as it had occurred. With one accord, however, the whole council refused to give credit to the story, asserting that there was every appearance of his having himself robbed and murdered the unfortunate Guglielmo, and threatening instantly to put him to the torture if he did not confess. This, upon his maintaining his own story, they proceeded to do, and by dint of repeated trials, they at length compelled him to say what they pleased; and afterwards proceeded to sentence him to be broken alive upon the wheel, while the state appropriated the whole of his possessions. The remains of the miser,

Grimaldi were then ordered to be removed, and interred in sacred ground; the beautiful Maddelena and her mother were driven with ignominy from the villa to their former abode; and the establishment of Fazio was completely broken up; his wife, with her family and domestics, being compelled to take refuge wherever they could. On being released from court, where she had appeared as evidence against her own husband, the wretched Pippa returned home; but to a home desolate and deserted by all but her children. In the agony of her grief, she wept, she raved, she tore her hair, too late perceiving, with feelings of remorse, the grievous error she had committed.

The tidings spread rapidly throughout all Pisa; and the people joined in expressing their astonishment, no less at the supposed enormity and deceit of which Fazio was accused, than at the strange treachery and ingratitude of his wife. Even her own relatives and friends, who assisted her, unanimously agreed in condemning her conduct, reproaching her bitterly for the degradation and ruin which she had brought upon her family; besides the inhumanity of having thus betrayed her husband to a painful and ignominious death. Having said this, they left her weeping bitterly, and overpowered

with intolerable remorse. On the ensuing day, the wretched Fazio was led forth, and drawn through the streets of Pisa on a sledge; and after being thus exhibited to the people, he was conducted to the place of execution. There, having been first broken upon the wheel, he was executed in the presence of the people, and left on the same spot, by way of example, during the rest of the day.

The tidings of this terrific scene coming to the ears of his wife, whom he had continued cursing and reviling to his latest hour, in a fit of desperation she resolved to take vengeance upon herself. About dinner hour then, there being few people to observe her, she seized her two little boys by the hand, and led them, weeping, towards the great square, the scene of the execution: while such as met her by the way only bestowed their maledictions on her, and allowed her to pass on. When she arrived at the foot of the platform, where the body lay, few spectators being present, she proceeded, still weeping bitterly, to ascend the steps of the platform, with the children along with her, no one around offering the least resistance. There, affecting to lament over the wretched fate of her husband, she was sternly and severely upbraided by all who stood near, who said aloud: "See how she can weep now that it is done! It is

her own work; she would have it so; and let her therefore despair!" The wretched wife then tearing her hair, and striking her lovely face and bosom with her clenched hands, while she pressed her burning lips to the cold features of her husband, next bade her little boys kneel down to kiss their father; at which sight the surrounding spectators, forgetting their anger, suddenly burst into tears. But their distracted mother, drawing a knife from her bosom, with remorseless fury, hastily plunged it into the breasts of her sons, and before the people were prepared to wrest the deadly weapon from her hand, she had already turned it against herself, and fallen upon the lifeless bodies of her husband and her children. With a loud cry the people ran towards the fatal spot, where they found the dying mother and her two infants, pouring their last sighs as they lay weltering in their blood. Tidings of this tragic scene having spread rapidly throughout all Pisa, crowds of people came hastening from all sides, filled with lamentation and terror, to witness so heart-rending a spectacle; where the yet warm and reeking bodies of the father, the mother, and the children, were piled indiscriminately upon each other. And surely nothing we have heard of the woes of Thebes, of Syracuse, or of Athens, of Troy, or of Rome, can be said to equal the domes-

MAHARAJA BEGFORI'S SARASWA